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# HUNGARY'S FIGHT FOR NATIONAL EXISTENCE



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# HUNGARY'S FIGHT FOR NATIONAL EXISTENCE

OR

THE HISTORY OF THE GREAT UPRISING  
LED BY FRANCIS RAKOCZI II.

1703-1711

BY

LADISLAS BARON HENGELMÜLLER

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED  
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1913

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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THANKS to the magnanimous resolution of the Emperor—King Francis Joseph—the remains of Francis Rakoczi II. were brought home to Hungary in 1906. For 170 years they had lain in foreign soil, at Rodosto in Turkey, now they have found their eternal rest in the cathedral of Kassa.

The occasion was one of grateful emotion and rejoicing in Hungary. The manifestations of these feelings drew also the attention of the foreign press to the memory of the man and the part he had played in Hungarian history. It was then that I discovered that there was no history written in English on Francis Rakoczi and the great national movement which he provoked and led. Yet for the time he and his cause were most important although disturbing factors in the policy of England, nobody worked harder or more sincerely for an accommodation between Rakoczi and his sovereign, who was England's ally, than her Minister in Vienna, and his despatches remain until to-day one of the main sources for the history of the first stage of the struggle.

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I have spent over thirty years of my life between England and the United States of America, and thus conceived the wish to narrate to Anglo-Saxon readers who Rakoczi was, what he really did, and why, in spite of his struggle ending in defeat, his memory is cherished by his nation.

I have no aim and no desire beyond writing a merely historical tale. Deep in the ground rest the bones of the Austrian and Hungarian soldiers fallen in Rakoczi's war. May all the issues that divided them lie as profoundly buried. Yet it is evident that the lesson to be derived from those days stands for all times. The long struggle ended with a compromise. It would have been well for Austria if her statesmen, understanding the necessity of the latter, would have avoided the outbreak of the former, and it would have been as well for Hungary and still better for Rakoczi if he had concluded the compromise when at the height of his power he could have done so voluntarily.

The present volume gives the history of the movement up to this moment, viz. till the breaking off of the peace negotiations in 1706. It is the history of the uprising on its upward plane. I hope to be able to continue the work and bring it to its natural ending with the Peace of Szathmar in a second volume.

The sources from which I have drawn my material are cited in the footnotes. I cannot let this occasion go by without thanking M. de

Karolyi, Director of the Imperial and Royal Archives in Vienna, for the friendly courtesy with which he has helped me in my researches. Thanks to him, I have been able to make use of hitherto unknown documents. At the same time I must mention that the Austrian sources for the period flow very scarcely. While, thanks to the literature of memoirs and letter collections, the figures of the French and English historical actors of the period stand vividly before us, and the same is even the case with Rakoczi, Bercsenyi, and other Hungarian leaders, there are no Austrian memoirs of the times. The private letters of her statesmen, ministers, and generals lie as yet unexplored in family archives, and in consequence their individual figures are less marked out before us than those of their foreign contemporaries.



## PREFACE BY THE RIGHT HON. JAMES BRYCE

No European country has a history more dramatic in its vicissitudes than that of Hungary, nor one better worth studying for the political lessons which may be drawn from its alternations of independence and of depression under foreign rule. Its ancient constitution, resembling in not a few points our own, is full of interest ; and the struggles caused by attempts to overthrow and efforts to maintain that constitution have been even longer and fiercer than those which distracted England in the seventeenth century. Yet Hungarian history is very little known in England or in America. No eminent writer has, so far as I know, produced in our language any treatise adequately presenting the annals of the Magyar nation, nor does any translation of a complete history by a native authority seem to have been published here. When, therefore, a distinguished man—who is not only a historical scholar but has also the advantage of a wide and varied experience in the world of affairs—offers to us a narrative of a momentous epoch in the story of his country's life, his work cannot but be welcome to English and American students.

Whoever has travelled through Hungary must have heard, and having heard, must remember, a martial air constantly played by the string bands of gipsy musicians who wander over the country. Of all the strains that have led men into battle there is none with such a power to stir the spirit as the Rakoczi March stirs it. Even the Marseillaise is not so charged with fire and passion. This air is named from Francis Rakoczi, and commemorates him better than any monuments of stone, for it is always sounding in Hungarian ears. Among those heroes of whom the soil of his fatherland has been so fertile he can hardly be counted the greatest, and his leadership of the nation, gallant as it was, is associated with as many defeats as victories. But he was a man of many engaging qualities and of a noble soul; not unduly elated by success, not unduly depressed by misfortune; a man faithful to his word, loyal to his country and his friends, and one who could bear with dignity the long weariness of exile. The Magyars have always cherished his memory; and a well-deserved honour was paid to it when, in 1906, the Hungarian Government, with the consent of the monarch against whose ancestors he had fought, brought back his remains to be interred in his native soil.

The history of the struggle against the House of Habsburg, which Rakoczi led, has a double interest for the student of modern European history, one interest which belongs to the general stream of

that history and another which touches Hungary in particular. Its phases of varying good and evil fortune were interwoven with the contemporaneously varying fortunes of France and the Germanic Empire in the great War of the Spanish Succession, which was blazing over Europe from 1701 till 1714. Lewis XIV profited by the diversion which the attacks of the Hungarians on the Austrian dominions created, and gave aid, though in far too scanty measure, to Rakoczi's treasury. The envoys of England, then allied to the Emperor, who were sent to Vienna to try to arrange a general peace, proceeded to Rakoczi's Court, and were favourably impressed by him and those who surrounded him, while the strength of the constitutional case which they were defending against the Emperors Leopold I. and Joseph I., as Kings of Hungary, roused their sympathy. Had Lewis been a little more energetic or the Habsburgs a little more accommodating, the English efforts would have succeeded.

For the fortunes of Hungary, Rakoczi's war was of great and permanent significance. For himself, indeed, it ended sadly, and it obtained for the Magyars at the Peace of Szathmar in 1711 less than they had fought for. Yet it saved the national liberties from the extinction which had threatened them, it secured a large measure of religious freedom, it kept alive that flame of patriotism which rose into a stronger flame in the first half of the nineteenth century.

In the age of which this book treats the spirit of nationality was at a low ebb in almost every part of the European Continent. In Hungary, however, thanks largely to the attachment of the people to their ancient constitution, it was an active force, strong enough to override the antagonism of Roman Catholics and Calvinists, and so to unite the great bulk of the nation in defence of their time-honoured rights. The years of effort during which Rakoczi led the resistance to the absolutistic and levelling Habsburg policy gave an impulse to national sentiment which was never thereafter lost. Passionate under Kossuth in the revolution of 1848-49, that sentiment gave a firm and steady support to Francis Deák in the long constitutional struggle which began in 1861, and which he guided to victory in 1867, winning back for Hungary all that the patriots of Rakoczi's day claimed. Those who would understand the character of one of the most gallant and forceful among European peoples, a race diverse in blood, in language, and in traditions from the Germans, Slavs, and Roumans that surround them, a race whose peculiar charm every one who has traversed their land loves to recall, will be grateful to the author of this book for the fresh light which it throws on one of the most striking episodes in the chequered and romantic annals of Hungary.

JAMES BRYCE.



## PREFACE BY COLONEL ROOSEVELT

IT is well for the English-speaking world to get a better perspective of history than it is possible to get without a far more thorough knowledge of the history of Central and Eastern Europe than can be obtained without such books as this, which we owe to the erudition and the profound and faithful study and the patriotic feeling of Baron von Hengelmüller. The ordinary English or American student, for instance, is absolutely ignorant that during the middle years of the seventeenth century, when in his eyes Cromwell was the one figure in Europe, the Eastern third of Europe, all Slavonic Europe, was shaken to its foundations by the Cossack uprising of Khmielnitski against the Poles, an event of incalculable consequence to the after-time history of Poland and Russia. To the dwellers in the forests, the steppes, and the marshy plains between the Carpathians and the Urals, the Baltic and the Black Sea, Khmielnitski's feats and fate were of more consequence than Cromwell's. In the same way the average Englishman or American, to whom Marlborough is one of the leading figures

of all time, is absolutely ignorant of the far-reaching part played during the years that were most eventful in Marlborough's career by the great Hungarian national leader whose life-work is described in this volume.

No European people has a history more striking and interesting than that of Hungary. When in the ninth century the wild Magyar horsemen burst from the Volgan Steppes into Middle Europe, there was nothing to indicate that their history would differ from that of the Avars who had preceded them, or the Cumans who came after them. They were a non-Aryan Asiatic race of pastoral nomads, and the flood of their invasion in its first effects upon Europe was similar to the many invasions of Finnish, Turkish, and Mongol tribes, which lasted from the time of the Hun till the time of the Ottoman. For a century or over the Magyars appeared merely as devastating hordes, who seated themselves on the necks of the Slavs, who rode across Italy and up the Rhone, and before whom the Germans cowered in terror. The victories of Otto and Henry the Fowler freed the Germans from Magyar supremacy, and the Magyars then proceeded to settle down in the countries they had won, and to organize a permanent society of the European type. The conversion of the people to Christianity in its Latin form, and the adoption of what was substantially the feudal form of government, immediately changed Hungary into a member

of the international world which centred around the Pope, and to a less degree around the Kaiser, as representing their ideals of Church and State. The governmental growth of Hungary offers unlimited possibilities of interest to the student. The famous Golden Bull, the charter of Hungarian liberties, is a document of almost as much interest as the great charter signed at Runnymede at about the same time. The transformation of the Magyars from wild and heathen Asiatic nomads into the magnates and warriors of a European kingdom wedded to a European polity had, among its other results, the establishment of Hungary as a bulwark against further Asiatic invasion of Europe. When the Mongols trampled the Slavonic peoples under their horses' hoofs, and overthrew the knighthood of Germany in Silesia, they also conquered Hungary and spent their last aggressive strength in the effort. Later, for a couple of centuries, Hungary stood as the barrier between Central Europe and the Turk—and scant was the gratitude it received from Central Europe in return. Finally, early in the sixteenth century, at the fatal battle of Mohacz, Hungarian liberty was lost and the Turk reigned supreme until the days of the great commander, Eugene of Savoy.

The Austrian steadily warred to drive the Turk from Hungary. Unfortunately this warfare was carried on so purely for the aggrandizement of Austria itself that the Hungarian was perplexed

to know whether the Turk or the German was his most dangerous foe and his hardest taskmaster. To racial was added in many cases religious antagonism. The South German was a Catholic, and many of the Hungarians were Protestants, the Protestant Magyars being Calvinists, while the Protestants among the Slavs who followed the Magyar lead were generally Lutherans. Very often the leading Hungarian patriots were thrown into the arms of the Turks, the enemies of Christendom, by the narrow and repressive policy of which they were the victims; and therefore very often they were of the highest usefulness to Austria's enemies, whether at Constantinople or Paris.

The great career of Rakoczi took place during the years when England, Austria, and Holland had united to curb the domineering ambition of the great monarch, Louis the Fourteenth of France. Rakoczi's revolt was therefore a matter of the gravest concern to the cabinet of London no less than of the cabinet of Vienna. His struggle ended at the moment in military defeat, yet he won for his nation a political recognition which was of vital consequence to Hungary in the future. All wise and far-seeing men earnestly hope for the continuation of the Dual Empire, the Empire Kingdom in which the same man is Emperor of Austria and Apostolic King of Hungary. All need for bitterness between Hungary and Austria has passed, and the bitterness will surely vanish if the statesmen

and people of the two nations will but work together in a spirit of mutual respect and hearty goodwill one to the other. There is no need of dwelling upon the past with any purpose save to pay a just meed of tribute to valour and sagacity, and to furnish lessons by which the statesmen of the present can profit. This is the spirit in which Baron von Hengelmüller has written. He has a great theme; he is writing of a great man and a great people, at a time when the life of the man marked a crisis in the life of the people. He is peculiarly fit to lay this history before the English-speaking public, for he is thoroughly acquainted with the habits of thought both of the Englishman and the American, and his long experience as Austrian Ambassador at Washington has qualified him to understand the people whose interests he desires to attract in a way that is given to but few men of Continental Europe. He has written a book of far-reaching historical importance, and one that should peculiarly appeal to every cultivated man among the English-speaking peoples.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.



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## INTRODUCTION

### I

ON the 27th of March 1676, in the castle of Borsi, Francis Rakoczi was born. A great name and an enormous fortune were his by birthright, but not their tranquil enjoyment. They were sorrowful days for his country, those in which he saw the light of the world. Four generations had passed since a permanent connection had been established between Austria and Hungary, and during those 150 years a conflict had been waged, with varying bitterness but without interruption, in council chambers and on battlefields between the policy of the one and the rights of the other. The climax had been reached in the reign of Leopold I., and for Hungary as a nation the struggle had become a question of life or death. By the traditions of his family, by his first surroundings and impressions as well as by the events of his early manhood, Rakoczi was predestined to be the leader of the national cause. He fulfilled his destiny, and for doing so had to die in exile and poverty, but he saved, if not the independence, at least the existence of his nation and its hopes for the future.

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During more than 500 years Hungary had been an important and powerful member of the family of Christian nations. For several epochs she had been the leading power in the East, and the influence of her kings had reached to the shores of the Baltic as well as to those of the Mediterranean. In the fifteenth century she had held her own against the rising power of the Turks, and proved the true bulwark of Europe. But on the evening of August 29, 1526, she seemed to lie prostrate at the feet of Sultan Soliman.

Great as was the blow dealt at Mohacs, it would not by itself account for the country's total collapse.<sup>1</sup> To the danger from without came that from within. The struggle for supremacy between the crown and the great feudal lords, which at the end of the Middle Ages marked the history of all Europe, was fought with violence and tenacity also in Hungary. The great king Matthias had curbed his nobles, but under the reign of his feeble successors the authority of the crown had dwindled to a mere shadow and all real power been usurped by a few oligarchs. They fought each other in selfish

<sup>1</sup> King Lewis II. had fought the battle of Mohacs with an army of about 27,000. This had been annihilated, but it had by no means represented all the fighting forces of the country. John Szapolyay, the most powerful of Hungarian oligarchs, had not been there, nor Christopher Frangipani, nor had the princely prelates brought all their retainers or the gentry of the different counties appeared in full numbers. There were elements enough for further resistance, but none was made, and the country seemed stunned. As late as 1580, Lorenzo, Venetian envoy in Vienna, wrote that in reality the Magyars were strong enough to resist the Turks, but that they had sunk from their former level; civil war, general deterioration, and the insolence of the great nobles had wrecked and ruined the country. MS. Imp. Library, Vienna.

factions,<sup>1</sup> they scoffed at King Wladislaw, they oppressed the gentry, and after the horrible rising of 1514 they reduced the peasantry to a condition of servitude. Similar things had happened in other countries—even in England after the death of Henry V.—but then they had a national dynasty, and were left alone to work out their own salvation. It was Hungary's fateful misfortune that the power of the Turk battered at her door at the time of an internal crisis, when all her forces seemed on the verge of dissolution.

Hungary was an elective kingdom, but from the origin of its history the nation had exercised its right in a way which had given the succession the appearance of heredity. As long as the House of Arpad existed, the crown remained in it; after its extinction, descent from it through the female line had recommended the Anjou, Luxemburg, and Habsburg kings to the choice of the nation. No such considerations had entered into the election of Matthias Hunyadi, during whose reign the country reached the summit of its fame. But he died without an heir, and so did the Jagello king who fell at Mohacs.

Two princes of the House of Austria had worn the Hungarian crown in the fifteenth century, and

<sup>1</sup> A week after the battle of Mohacs, Christopher Frangipani wrote: "The blow was useful, for if the Hungarians had triumphed over the Turkish Emperor, who could have lived under them, who remained amongst them and where would have been the limit of their pride?" These lines of the great Croatian lord are characteristic of his relations with his Magyar brethren and the condition of the country.

ever since their successors had coveted its reversion. Treaties and alliances had been concluded, the double marriage between the Habsburgs and Jagellos arranged for the purpose. Now the vacancy foreseen in those conventions had occurred, and Ferdinand of Austria claimed the throne of Hungary in virtue of his own and his wife's rights. But neither King Matthias and Wladislaw could confer more rights by treaty nor Princess Anne bring them in dowry than they themselves possessed, and the nation had never renounced its right of free election. Nor did Ferdinand neglect any means to ensure his ascent to the throne in the constitutional way, and by far the most powerful argument for his aspirations was the consideration that Hungary needed foreign help to resist Turkey, and that none was more able to give it than her nearest neighbour, the sovereign of Austria, who was the brother of the most powerful prince in Christendom, Emperor Charles V.

Unfortunately the dissensions and factions which had lamed the national resistance during the war did not die on the field of Mohacs. In fact, the nation did the worst thing possible in the impending crisis. It divided within itself, and held a double election. Two kings—Ferdinand of Austria and John Szapolyay—were chosen and crowned. Civil war ensued, the weaker side appealed to Turkey, Sultan Soliman interfered, nominally in favour of Szapolyay, in reality of himself, and the

final result of twenty years of war and devastation was the cutting up of Hungary into three parts. The east and the south, with Buda, the ancient capital, became a Turkish province, the Habsburg kings retained the north and the west, and Transylvania was made a semi-independent principality under the double supremacy of the King and the Sultan.

Christian races under Moslem rule have no history. So wrote the historian of the Ottoman Empire seventy years ago,<sup>1</sup> and his remark is certainly true at least for the times when that empire was strong. Nothing worth recording happened in the subjugated parts of Hungary. Where resistance was hopeless, none was made; and until the rescue came from without, the inhabitants had only the choice of leaving their homes or dragging out their monotonous lives without hopes, aims, and aspirations.

The rest of the country was saved from a similar fate by its connection with Austria, but this connection itself, by the nature of things, developed on lines which made it incompatible with what Hungary had meant to save, viz. her national independence. By law and by right there was no other constitutional tie whatsoever between Hungary and the other dominions of the House of Habsburg than the community of their rulers. But in reality Hungary became a subordinate part

<sup>1</sup> Hammer, *Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches*.

of a world-wide fabric of aims and interests. Thirty years after he had been elected King of Hungary, Ferdinand succeeded his brother in the Imperial dignity, and as long as it existed it remained in his line. Through it he and his successors became central figures in the whole network of European politics. Naturally, and inevitably, the issues resulting therefrom, their position in Germany, their rivalry with France, their struggles against the Reformation, were of far greater importance to them than Hungary and the East. The consequence was that the protection it received against the Turks was insufficient, while at home the inevitable struggle between royal power and feudal rights became one between foreign rule and national liberty.

In the early days of his reign Ferdinand I. had aimed at reconquering the integrity of Hungary. But his own forces were insufficient, and his Imperial brother had far too many irons in the fire ever to make an undivided effort in that direction. Under the stress of continued reverses, other occupations, and the growing estrangement between king and people, his policy changed.<sup>1</sup> Resignation took the place of ambition, and was, in its turn, followed by indifference. The partition of the realm was finally accepted and acquiesced in, and

<sup>1</sup> The disastrous campaign of 1542 forms the turning-point of that policy. All the subsequent wars with Turkey—1552–1559, 1566–1568, 1593–1608, 1662–1664, and even the glorious war of 1683–1698 in its beginning—were merely defensive, and forced upon them by determined Turkish aggression.

whatever attempts were still made by Ferdinand and his successors to enlarge their share were henceforth directed, not against the Porte, but against the feebler vassal in Transylvania. If they led to new wars, as they did in 1552, 1566, and 1591, it was because the Turks were so resolved; and in spite of heroic episodes—amongst which the defences of Eger by Dobo and Szigetvar by Zrinyi stand out in legendary fame—of temporary successes, in spite even of the manifest beginning of the decay of the Turkish Empire, all these campaigns ended, not with a reduction, but with an extension of its frontiers. After the Peace of Zsitva Torok (1606), which marks the close of a period, it became the settled policy of the Imperial court to avoid war with Turkey at any price. Hungary came to be looked upon as an outpost for the defence of Germany, and whether its stretch was a little longer or shorter, whether the Turkish pashas in the border forts kept the peace or forced the inhabitants, through repeated predatory inroads, to declare their allegiance, was a matter of minor importance.<sup>1</sup>

What contributed to the maintenance and development of this policy was the reaction from the feelings which it had engendered in Hungary. In the Council of Rudolf II. the question was even

<sup>1</sup> Pauler, *The Conspiracy of Wesselényi*, vol. i. p. 36; Acsady, *History of Hungary*, vol. ii. p. 207 and further; and even Albert Lefaiivre, *Histoire des Magyars*, perhaps the most hostile author who wrote on Hungarian history, vol. i. pp. 72, 146-149 and later.

discussed whether it would not be better to leave Hungary altogether to her fate, as she had always shown herself hostile to Austria, and her eventual liberations from the Turks might become a danger rather than an advantage to the dynasty, at least as long as her crown remained elective.<sup>1</sup>

If these were the hitches in the new connection, the rubs were not wanting either. Their causes lay deep in the nature of things, and to avoid them would have required more statesmanship than anybody in Austria or Hungary possessed in those days. The first Habsburg kings, Ferdinand I. and Maximilian II., were certainly no tyrants. Compared with their contemporaries, the Tudor kings of England, the Valois of France, not to speak of Philip II. of Spain, they were moderate in their aims and mild in their means. Nor had they any settled design to do away with Hungary's national institutions in order to create a homogeneous Empire and assimilate her with its other constituent parts.<sup>2</sup> But they did want to consolidate their rule,

<sup>1</sup> Hoefler, *Archiv für österreichische Geschichte*, vol. xliii. p. 205.

<sup>2</sup> Unconsciously these tendencies existed from the beginning, but their conscious and unremitting pursuit developed later, and at different periods held absolute sway in the policy of Austria towards Hungary. At the time when centralization was at its height some Austrian writers have tried to prove that it goes back to the beginning of the connection between the two countries, and that already Ferdinand I. was fully resolved to create a centralized Empire. So Bidermann in his *Geschichte der österreichischen Gesamtstaatsidee*, but the facts he cites have really no bearing on the point, and only prove that Ferdinand wished to obtain troops and subsidies from all his countries for his wars against the Turks. The subject is well exposed in Gindely, *Rudolf II. und seine Zeit*, vol. i. pp. 30-36. So little were such designs entertained by Ferdinand I., that by his last will he divided his countries between his three sons. Considering that they in their turn left eleven sons between them, it seems an extraordinary dispensation that one



to strengthen and extend the royal power; they stood for the Roman Imperial idea, and they were, and remained, foreigners. So their aims and efforts brought them into conflict not only with the liberties and privileges of Hungary as they had come down from the Middle Ages, but with its inmost national feelings and aspirations. The same forces were then at work everywhere in Europe, but what in other countries remained a matter between king and nation, between modern development and rights founded on the medieval structure of society, became in Hungary a conflict between German power and national independence.

Long before an Austrian Empire was thought of, central Austrian bodies were created. The army was the Emperor's and his alone, so were the revenues which he drew as King, or Archduke, or Margrave from his different countries, and which were paid into his exchequer from their boards of treasury. For their administration the board of war (*Hofkriegsrath*), which alone had authority over the army, and a central board of treasury (*Hofkammer*) were established, to which latter the Hungarian chamber of finance was subordinated. Even earlier, Ferdinand I. had instituted a privy council, which formed the first beginning of an Imperial cabinet, and soon became the most important body in the Imperial court. Few Hungarians

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hundred years after his death all his inheritance should again be united in the hands of his grandson's grandson.

have sat therein, and none of them has ever had any influence on its innermost deliberations, which turned on the great questions of the Emperor's world-wide policy. So the most vital issues of national life, those relating to foreign policy and the army, passed out of the reach of the Hungarian parliament, and in the eyes of Europe Hungary lost the recognition of her separate national identity.

For two hundred years the records of Hungarian parliaments are filled with complaints against the violation of the country's constitutional rights. They began as early as 1530, and they continued with increasing vehemence as time went on, as one reign succeeded the other, and no redress was given. The kings convoked the diets because they could not get taxes and subsidies without it, and the estates answered the royal demands by enumerating their grievances. The undue influence of foreigners on Hungarian affairs, their appointment to offices and emoluments, the leaving vacant the office of palatine resulting from the purpose of its abolition, the subjecting of Hungarians to trial outside the kingdom, the encroachments and exactions of the Imperial treasury, the excesses and vexations of the foreign mercenaries, and later on the violation of the rights of the Protestants were complained of and protested against in nearly every subsequent session. Of all these standing grievances none was more bitterly felt or created deeper exasperation than the insults and injuries which high and low had to

suffer from the foreign soldiers who were quartered on the nation in time of peace as well as of war. They were recruited from all parts of the world—Germany, Flanders, and Italy; they were paid irregularly or not at all, and they recouped themselves on the unfortunate country by preying on its inhabitants and committing depredations and acts of violence.<sup>1</sup>

Discontent on one side, distrust on the other, estrangement on both were naturally engendered by this state of things, but as yet the fear of the Turk prevailed. Such as it was, the part of Hungary over which the power of the Habsburg kings extended seemed all that was left of a mighty past, and the only spot to which the hope of a brighter future could be attached. No uprising against their rule occurred in the sixteenth century. The crisis came when religious persecution was added to the political grievances, and Rudolf II. resolved on dealing Protestantism in Hungary a stunning blow.

The new faith had made rapid progress in Hungary. By the end of the sixteenth century the great majority of its inhabitants had embraced it. A few families of the high nobility had remained Catholics, the rest and almost all the gentry had adopted the faith of Calvin and Zwingli; the citizens

<sup>1</sup> Compare Acsady, *History of Hungary*, vol. ii. pp. 175, 176, and 266-268; Pauler, vol. i. pp. 56-60; also Szalay, *History of Hungary*, vol. iv., and older writings like *Histoire des Révolutions de Hongrie*, vol. i. chaps. ii. iii. and iv.; also Ritter, *Deutsche Geschichte*, vol. ii. p. 175.

of the free towns—all Germans—were Lutherans almost to a man. From political considerations Ferdinand I. and Maximilian II.<sup>1</sup> had been tolerant towards the adherents of the new religion, and their example was followed by the high Catholic clergy, who, in the second part of the century, filled most of the high Governmental offices, and took a keener interest in worldly matters than in the pastoral work among their flocks.<sup>2</sup> At the beginning of the seventeenth century, however, the counter-reformation was in full swing in all the Catholic countries of Europe. It would have come to Hungary anyhow, but the way in which it came first was the personal act of Rudolf II., and he was then in the very depth of his mental derangement.

For a fugitive moment the reign of this unfortunate sovereign seemed to open fairer prospects. In 1603 his power in Hungary extended farther than that of his father and grandfather had ever done. The war with Turkey had lasted twelve years, and on the whole had not been unsuccessful. The old grievances of the country had remained unremedied, and the complaints of the diet had

<sup>1</sup> In his youth Maximilian was even suspected of a leaning towards Protestantism, and in Rome his Catholic zeal was never fully trusted. Although the fears and hopes attached to this belief proved groundless, and Maximilian after his accession to the throne accentuated his Catholic belief, he never persecuted Protestants. Altogether he was of a conciliatory nature, fond of pleasure, and although neither liking Hungarians nor trusting them, glad at heart when he could be at peace with his subjects. *Acsady*, vol. ii. p. 220; and *Gindely*, vol. i. pp. 24-25.

<sup>2</sup> Compare a memorandum, "De lo stato presente ecclesiastico et politico in Ungaria," by the Papal nuncio in Vienna, 1605, in the archives of the Borghese family in Rome.

become louder and more vehement, but they had voted the subsidies, and the Hungarian leaders—Nicholas Palffy and Francis Nadasdy at their head—had been foremost in their devotion and achievements. The hope seemed permissible that the conquering tide of the Turks might be finally turned back. Even Transylvania had fallen into the Emperor's hands, and never had he had so strong an army. It was then that he conceived the idea of turning his power against what he considered the enemy at home, to establish absolute rule, and to begin by crushing the Protestants. His resolution was not inspired by religious zeal, nor was it instigated by Rome, for ever since the outbreak of his mental malady he had shown a marked aversion to the clergy, and he hardly ever received the papal nuncio. Shut up in his castle at Prague, accessible only to his astrologers, alchemists, and valets, the suspicion that his nearest of kin considered him unfit to reign enraged him more than anything else, and the desire to impress them with his energy and power, and to get rid of their importunities about providing for the succession, seems to have been the main motive for his decisions.<sup>1</sup>

There followed in rapid succession the trial of Stephen Illeshazy, when he—one of the foremost magnates of the kingdom and a staunch adherent

<sup>1</sup> The nuncio as well as the Spanish ambassador frequently complained to their senders that the Emperor would only receive them once or twice a year, and then for a few minutes only. Gindely, vol. i. pp. 65-67.

of the royal house—was condemned to death and his property confiscated for felony on the strength of a judgment which had never been rendered, but concocted afterwards;<sup>1</sup> the order to Thurzo, Captain-General of the Cisdanubian district, to expel the Protestant priests to whom he had given refuge after they had been driven out of Styria, and the taking away of the great cathedral in Kassa from the Protestants and restoring it to the Catholics, of whom there were none in the city. And to crown these acts came the insertion of the famous Article XXII., when, after the protestations which had been raised at the session of March 1604 against these violations of religious liberty, the Emperor sanctioned the XXI. Articles which had been passed, but on his own authority added another to the statute-book, by which he declared his resolution to clean the country from heretics, and forbade, under severe penalties, any future attempt to bring this matter before the diet.

Then the country was ripe for a revolution. It only wanted a signal to break out and a leader to head it. The first was given by the mutiny

<sup>1</sup> This famous trial began in 1600 and ended November 3, 1604. It took its origin from Illeshazy's resistance to the redeeming of two small boroughs which had been mortgaged to his wife and were now to be made free towns. Other arraignments for disrespect and disobedience were added to the articles of accusation, but the main motive of the whole proceeding was the desire of the Imperial treasury to get possession of Illeshazy's great wealth, and the boundless rage of Rudolf at his having dared to oppose the royal will. An interesting essay on the subject has been written by Arpad de Karolyi, *Illeshazy kútlenségi pore*, Budapest, 1883.

of some bands of Hajducks then in the Imperial service, the second stood ready in the person of Stephen Bocskay.

The uprising which followed is one of the most memorable episodes in Hungarian history—memorable through the conduct of the man who led it, through its success, but most of all through its effect on the future standing of Transylvania.

Transylvania is a part of Hungary as much as Wales is of England. Its separation from the mother-country was a diminution and a mutilation for both of them, and felt as such by Hungarian patriots in the sixteenth century. Caused originally by the rivalry between the two kings, it was perpetuated by the will and the power of Turkey. In those troublous days, when faction stood against faction, when high and low changed their allegiance from king to king and from both of them to the Turk, when everybody's hand seemed raised against everybody else's and all law had ceased because there was nobody to enforce it, men were not wanting who saw in the erection of the new principality a stepping-stone for their own advancement, and therefore lent their services to it. But whatever there was left of Hungarian patriotism thought otherwise, deplored the division, and longed and worked for reunion. John Szapolyay himself agreed to limit the separation to his lifetime, and concluded a treaty with Ferdinand by which Transylvania was to revert to the latter after his death. It

was his all-powerful minister, Cardinal Martinuzzi—better known in history as Friar George—who had risen to greatness through him and been his faithful adherent, who carried out the treaty, very much against the inclination of the widow queen Isabella. However, the friar was a politician as well as a patriot, and he considered that the Porte should not know of the arrangements before Ferdinand was in a position to protect the country from its wrath. The tortuous policy and winding ways he followed to the end cost him his life, for Ferdinand's generals were either not able or did not want to understand him, and he was assassinated by Castaldo's order. The consequence was a new war with Turkey, the return of the Szapolyays, and the final loss of Transylvania for more than a century.<sup>1</sup>

The happenings in Transylvania during the next forty years have but little bearing on the general history of Hungary. Left relatively alone

<sup>1</sup> Whether General Castaldo himself believed the accusations—some of which appear idiotic on the surface—he forwarded to Vienna against Martinuzzi or whether he was simply moved by envy of the cardinal's wealth and power is a point not perfectly cleared up. After the deed was done (December 17, 1551), Ferdinand took the responsibility upon himself, but in reality the only known order he had given to Castaldo was a hypothetical one empowering the general to proceed to extreme measures if he should really become convinced that Martinuzzi intended to betray him and his small army of 6000 men into the hands of the Turks. Castaldo's complaints against the friar began on September 29, but in the letters which Ferdinand had written on December 9, 12, and 14 to the man who had been made cardinal at his instance a few months before there is no evidence that he gave any credit to those accusations or suspected Martinuzzi. The Hungarian historian Michael Horvath has written a most interesting essay on Friar György's life, published in the fourth volume of his smaller historical works, Budapest, 1868.



by Emperor and Sultan, its princes had their hands full with their internal affairs. Their princely throne was not an easy-chair. Most of their elections had to be made good by force of arms against some rival pretenders, and when these were defeated new ones stood always ready to snatch at supreme power. The intrigues and fights of factious nobles, the oppression of the Szekelys,<sup>1</sup> their revolt and its suppression, and, after the Bathorys had succeeded the last Szapolyay, their attempts at counter-reformation fill the pages of the principality's history during the latter part of the sixteenth century.

A period of bloodshed, devastation, and misery opened for the unfortunate country with Rudolf II.'s long war against the Porte, but its sorest trials did not come from the Turks. Sigismund Bathory sat then on the throne. He joined the Emperor's side (1594), and a few years later conceived the idea of abdicating in his favour. Hardly had he carried it out when he repented of it and returned. Three times within four years did he repeat the game of renouncing and resuming his power, until he finally disappeared from the political scene.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Tradition and legend have attributed to the Szekelys descent from the Huns of Attila. Modern historical research has established that they were a Kabar or Esra tribe, who came into the country with the Magyars, and already in the eleventh century had fully assimilated themselves to them. The first Hungarian kings had assigned settlements to them in Transylvania and given them an organization of their own, which they kept through centuries. Although they spoke the Magyar language, and to all purposes were Magyar, they were in frequent feud with the Transylvanian nobles, and many of them had been subjected to the state of the peasantry, viz. to servitude.

<sup>2</sup> The life of Sigismund Bathory reads more like a novel than history. He was but nine years old when he succeeded his father, during whose lifetime

But in the meanwhile his shifts and changes had led to civil and foreign war, to the interference of the hospodar of Wallachia, and finally to the reign of blood and terror of General Basta, which to this day is remembered in Transylvania. In the winter of 1603 the Emperor's power seemed firmly established, but the country was ruined. Basta himself thus described its state :

The changes and wars have turned the country into a desert. The boroughs and villages have been burned, most of the inhabitants and their cattle killed, or driven away. In consequence, taxes, excise, bridge and road tolls yield but little, the mines are deserted, there are no hands to work.<sup>1</sup>

Rudolf II. had done everything to drive Hungary and Transylvania to despair. To fill the measure, his generals forced the arms into the hands of the

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he had already been elected prince. He was twenty-two when he had to defend his throne against a faction headed by his own cousin. In its suppression he showed energy, in its punishment cruelty. For siding with the Emperor he was rewarded by the hand of an Austrian archduchess, sister of the future Emperor Ferdinand II. She was young and beautiful, but he lived with her as with a sister. In the campaigns of 1595 and 1596 he took a not undistinguished part. In April 1598 he took leave from his subjects, announcing to them his abdication and their transfer to the Emperor. In August he was back again, and in the ensuing March abdicated a second time in favour of his cousin Andrew, who a few years before had to flee before his persecution. After the latter's fall and death he tried to resume his power, and spent the next three years warring with the Wallachians and Imperialists. In 1602 he abdicated finally in favour of the Emperor, and spent the remainder of his life (he died in Prague, March 1613) in the castle of Lobkowitz, which he had received from the latter, together with a pension of 50,000 ducats. Whether it was the shadow of his cousin Baltazar, who had been beheaded without a trial, which preyed upon his mind, or whether it was unhinged by his peculiar marital relations is a matter of surmise for contemporary writers. It certainly was as unsound as that of Rudolf II. himself or of Charles IX. of France. As shown by their examples, neurasthenia in its worst form is far from being a modern disease.

<sup>1</sup> Acady, vol. ii. pp. 230-240; Smay, vol. iv. pp. 448-470.

man best able to wield them. This was Stephen Bocskay, Prince Sigismund's uncle, the ablest and most influential man in his dominions, ambitious, far-seeing, cool-headed, and patient. He, too, had wished to unite the whole nation under the House of Habsburg against the Turks, had favoured his nephew's plans, negotiated his treaties with the Emperor, and remained faithful to the latter after Sigismund's second abdication in favour of his cousin. For the next few years he had to flee from his country, and retired to Prague, where he was slighted,<sup>1</sup> but where he had the opportunity to take the full measure of the Emperor's court and government. In 1604 he had returned to Hungary, and was quietly living on his estates when the accidental seizure of some letters he had written to Gabriel Bethlen, and his impending arrest by Belgiojoso, forced his hands, and caused him openly to head the national movement.

The uprising which followed was completely successful. The Emperor's power depended on his armies, and their existence on his ability to pay them. Simple calculation ought to have told him that he had not the means to do so for any length of time, and short reflection convinced him that the subsidies he had hitherto received from the German Empire against the Turks would not be forthcoming against his Protestant subjects.<sup>2</sup> The hereditary

<sup>1</sup> Gindely, vol. ii. p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> Gindely, vol. i. gives a very interesting statement of the Emperor's finances.

provinces, the two Austrias and Moravia, were in a hardly lesser ferment than Hungary, and their discontent was heightened when within a year Bocskay stood on their frontiers, and they had to suffer as much from the retreating and disbanding Imperial soldiers as from the inroads of the rebels. Rudolf's suicidal policy drove the princes of his own house into opposition against him, until at last his brother Matthias wrested first his consent for negotiations and then his abdication as King of Hungary from him when he refused to ratify the Treaties of Vienna and Zsitva Torok.

Successful as Bocskay was in the field, his achievements as a statesman rank higher. To the Sultan, fully occupied with troubles at home and in Asia, and hitherto unable to carry on the war with vigour in Hungary, his uprising was a god-send, and he hastened to proclaim him Prince of Transylvania and later King of Hungary. But Bocskay had never intended to sever the ties between his country and the House of Habsburg, and his head had not been turned by his successes. He was not unmindful of his personal advantages; he kept Transylvania and enlarged his share by the addition of some Hungarian counties and the title of a prince of the Roman Empire. But to the establishment of a vassal kingdom, dependent on the favours of the Sultan, he preferred the maintenance of the existing balance of powers. While he had concluded an offensive and defensive

alliance with Turkey he was negotiating for peace with the archduke in Vienna. The terms upon which he insisted, and which he obtained, stipulated for freedom of religion as formerly established—viz. for the two Protestant confessions and for the privileged classes—faithful observance of the kingdom's rights and laws, exclusion of foreigners from offices and military commands, with the sole exceptions of the commanderships of two fortresses, besides redress for a series of specific grievances. The Articles of the Peace of Vienna were afterwards incorporated into the Hungarian statute-book.

Five months later (November 1606) peace was also concluded between the Emperor and Turkey. It entailed some loss of territory, but was made on less humiliating terms than Ferdinand and Maximilian had had to accept. The net result of fifteen years of warfare was the maintenance of the division of the kingdom into three parts, although with a considerable alteration of their respective sizes.<sup>1</sup> But Hungary had proved that she could make a successful fight for her constitutional rights, and Transylvania had become an important factor in the equation of the future.

On his deathbed Bocskay wrote that so long as the Hungarian crown remained in possession of a stronger nation and Hungarian royalty was dependent

<sup>1</sup> After the two Treaties of Vienna and Zsitva Torok 1222 square miles remained to the Emperor as King of Hungary. The share of Turkey was 1859 and that of Bocskay 2082 square miles (these numbers are given in geographical square miles).

on Germans, the maintenance of a separate Hungarian principality in Transylvania would remain a necessity. These words show that he had renounced the ideals or hopes of his earlier days, but the views they expressed became an article of faith for most Hungarian patriots of the next three generations. They were held in both camps, in that of the adherents of the Imperial house as well as in that of its opponents. Cardinal Pazman, during Ferdinand II.'s reign Primate of Hungary, the head and soul of Catholic counter-reformation, a devoted adherent of the House of Habsburg, but a true Hungarian patriot as well, shared them, and maintained that a separate Transylvania was the necessary safeguard for the preservation of Hungary as a nation.

In the years which now followed Hungary had little to complain of and still less to fear from her kings or Austria. The troubles were already brewing which led to the Thirty Years' War, and for a generation to come the Emperors Matthias and Ferdinands II. and III. had enough to do in the West, where not only their Imperial position in Germany, but even their hold over their hereditary provinces was at stake. Matthias had won his crowns from his brother through the help of the allied Hungarians, Austrians, and Moravians, and having satisfied the former, found himself confronted on one side with the demands of the others who desired for themselves what their allies in Hungary

had won, and on the other with the hostility of Rudolf II., who, although threatened with rebellion in his one remaining country, was still childishly bent on regaining what Matthias had lost. When he had succeeded in Bohemia and to the Imperial crown he only found new cares and dangers. Little as he may have liked the stipulations he had had to agree to in Vienna,<sup>1</sup> and the position won by Transylvania,<sup>2</sup> he could not think of subverting them by open force and raising a new storm in the East. When he died (March 1619), his successor, Ferdinand II., found himself in a still more perilous position. Bohemia was in open rebellion, Moravia and Silesia had joined her, in the two Austrias the estates refused to do him homage, the Imperial crown had yet to be won. In Hungary alone, where he had been elected and crowned the year before, was his succession not contested from the outset. And the troubles which arose there shortly afterwards had their birth, not in the country, but were carried into it from outside.

It was a fortunate thing for Hungary and Austria that Turkey was then in the hands of feeble rulers,

<sup>1</sup> We may gauge his views from a letter he wrote to his cousin Ferdinand. It had been stipulated in the Peace of Vienna that the frontier forts against the Turks should be garrisoned by Hungarian troops. Shortly afterwards the Porte suggested to the Emperor that it might be better to have foreign garrisons there. Informing his cousin of this proposal, he said that it would indeed seem a dispensation of Providence that the Turk himself should wish to abolish the laws enacted in the times of Bocskay.

<sup>2</sup> In another letter (November 10, 1613) he writes to Ferdinand that the palatine was in constant communication with the estates, even against his (the Emperor's) orders, and that the latter openly declared that the Prince of Transylvania was the best means of keeping him in order.

torn by internal confusion and violent changes on the throne, occupied with Syrian revolutions and Polish wars. The thought of what might have happened had there been a sultan like Soliman in the palace, or even a grand vizier like the later Kara Mustapha at the Porte, might well make us pause. As it was, the peace was badly kept; not only did the frontier pashas violate its stipulation, make inroads into the neighbouring counties, force their inhabitants to recognize their supremacy and pay them tribute, and carry thousands of them away into slavery,<sup>1</sup> but they also allowed their troops to join the ranks of the Transylvanian princes in open war against the Emperor. But, at least, official peace was kept and renewed from power to power, and Ferdinand II. was saved from the danger of seeing a Turkish army arrive under the walls of Vienna at the time of his direst need.

The troubles of Austria and the decline of Turkey were Transylvania's opportunity, and she was fortunate in finding princes well able to make use of it. Bocskay outlived his triumph only by a few months, and his next successors left no mark on history. The one, Sigismund Rakoczi, old, tired, more anxious about his Hungarian estates than about political adventures, abdicated after a reign of fifteen months; the other, Gabriel Bathory,

<sup>1</sup> The diet of 1634 complained that within the last three years the Turks had forced over a hundred villages into allegiance and tribute, and carried 2000 inhabitants into slavery. Pauler, vol. i. p. 4, tells that from 1606 to 1661 the Turks built 70 frontier forts, devastated 150 square miles of country, and carried at an average 10,000 souls yearly into slavery.



young, not without talents, but tyrannical, cruel, unbalanced, like his uncle Sigismund, was dethroned and assassinated four years later. But from 1613 to 1648 the principality was ruled by two strong men — Gabriel Bethlen and George Rakoczi I. Widely different as were their individualities, they were both princes of ability, ambition, courage, and circumspection. Both succeeded in firmly establishing their authority at home and in obtaining the goodwill of the powers in Constantinople. Then they stepped forth as the champions of Hungary's religious and national liberty, made war on the Emperors Ferdinand II. and III., won honours, power, and riches for themselves, and made Transylvania a factor in European politics. But the general condition of things created by the Turkish conquest was not altered, and for Hungary the importance of their historical part lay, not in what they achieved, but in what they prevented.

Gabriel Bethlen's, or to call him by his Hungarian name Bethlen Gabor's, ambitions soared high. The crown of Hungary, enlarged by Austria and Styria,<sup>1</sup> the crown of Poland, that of a newly-to-be-created Dacia, had all flickered before his mental vision at times. But he was as wary as ambitious, as quick to stop as to move, always ready to reckon with probabilities, never willing to push fortune to

<sup>1</sup> In October 1619 he had offered his alliance to the Elector Palatine Frederick, then elected king by the revolted Bohemians, against a yearly subsidy of 300,000 florins and the annexation of Austria, Styria, Carinthia, and Carniol to Hungary.

extremes. Three times he had made war on Ferdinand II.; each time he had been the aggressor; each time he concluded peace on essentially the same terms: Transylvania, with the addition of seven Hungarian counties, the castles of Munkacs and Tokaj, the status of a prince of the Roman Empire, the duchies of Oppeln and Ratibor in Silesia for himself; for Hungary the reconfirmation of the Articles of the Peace of Vienna. In his foreign policy he was constant as to his aims, shifty as to his means. He stood forth as a champion of the Protestant cause, but had at first offered his alliance to Ferdinand II. When he did not receive a satisfactory answer he joined his enemies. After the Peace of Nikolsburg he asked for the hand of the Emperor's daughter. When his proposal was not accepted he married a princess of Brandenburg, and became the King of Denmark's ally. But he steered his vessel with consummate skill through the vicissitudes of the times, and left his country enhanced in strength and consideration. At home he was a wise and mild ruler, a liberal patron of science and art.

After his death (1629) the usual factions and fights for the succession followed, but George Rakoczi came out of them victorious. Under him Transylvania continued in the ascendant. Shrewd, wary, and patient, he was more intent on consolidating his power at home and developing his country's resources than upon warlike adventures.

Above all, he had the genius of acquisitiveness. Heir to an already large fortune, he had married the heiress of a still greater one, and then increased their possessions by the spoils of his domestic enemies and grants obtained from the King of Hungary. Finally he married his son to the heiress of the Bathorys, and made his family one of the richest in Christendom. Altogether he belonged to a type more frequent among Anglo-Saxons than among Magyars, and, had he been born in the present days in America, would undoubtedly have become a millionaire, endowing public schools and lecturing Bible classes himself.<sup>1</sup> But when put to it, or when he found it advisable, he knew how to wield the sword as well. For twelve years he had kept peace with the Emperor, all offers and temptations from Sweden, France, and German princes notwithstanding. It does not seem that Hungary had any particular new grievance in 1643, but neither grounds for discontent nor pretexts for an uprising were wanting. The protection of the country against the Turkish pashas was sorely neglected, and Catholics and Protestants were always at loggerheads, the latter complaining of non-execution of the laws and treaties in their favour and of illegal violence of Catholic landlords against their tenants of other confessions. And Ferdinand III. was then sorely pressed by Sweden and France, so

<sup>1</sup> He said of himself that in all his life he had never been drunk, had never desired any other woman than his wife, nor to read any other book than the Bible.

Rakoczi judged that his time had come. Having put himself on the safe side with Turkey, and concluded an alliance with the two powers, he took to arms. The campaign which ensued was not marked by any particular military exploits on either side, but was terminated two years later by the Peace of Linz, by which Hungary's constitutional rights and religious liberty were again reconfirmed, and Rakoczi gained some more new estates.

In all its essentials the Treaty of Linz was a repetition of those of Vienna, Nicolsburg, and Pozsony. But it contained an important innovation, which marked the progress of the times. Hitherto all the treaties concluded and laws enacted had confined religious freedom to the privileged classes, nobles, gentry, and citizens of free towns. By the new treaty, the stipulations of which were embodied in the legislation of 1647, the right to follow and exercise their own religious judgment was also granted to tenants and peasants, even on the estates of the Catholic clergy.

The Treaty of Linz marks the ending of another period. It had begun with a just revolt against despotic measures; it had led to the rise of Transylvania to importance and power. The presence of princes like Gabriel Bethlen and George Rakoczi was in itself a check to the renewal of the attempts of Rudolf II., even had such an intention existed in Vienna, which at the time it did not. Besides, there was something flattering

as well as reassuring to the national pride in the existence of a Magyar principality which again held rank in the councils of nations, and was sought after by powers like France and Sweden. It is therefore not to be wondered at that the newly developed order of things became dear to the Hungarian heart, and exercised influence on their political conceptions even after it was gone. But in reality there was much that was fortuitous and still more that was precarious in the position of the principality. If it had proved a safeguard against real or possible dangers from the West, it offered no remedy, nor even the hope of one, against the graver peril still looming in the East. Turkey's power, though it seemed lulled in slumber, was as yet unbroken; the ties which bound the principality in vassalage, if loosened, were far from being cut. Whatever its princes had achieved had been done by the connivance or forbearance of the Porte. As long as they paid their tribute and gave due attention to keeping the favour of the grand vizier of the day, it would gladly allow them to weaken the Emperor and be a thorn in his side. But it would allow them nothing more, as Rakoczi was sternly made aware when he negotiated the Treaty of Linz. Not one inch of ground had been recovered from the infidel, and there was no hope that it ever could be by Transylvania. The best minds of the country understood and felt it. Nicholas Esterhazy, palatine from 1625 to 1645, a fervent patriot, wrote that he

must be indeed a heaven-born idiot who imagined that the country's salvation could ever be achieved by some Hungarian prince or principality alone. And Nicholas Zrinyi, by character, talents, and military achievements the foremost Hungarian of the next generation, thought likewise, and in spite of many disappointments remained a staunch adherent of the House of Habsburg until the inglorious Peace of Vasvar made him give up his hope of seeing the nation's ideals realized by it.

In spite of the four Transylvanian wars, this second period in the history of the connection between Hungary and Austria was one of comparative appeasement and better feeling. Deeply impressed as Ferdinand II. was with the sense of his rights, as well as with that of the duties corresponding to them, he respected the rights of others. Eighteen months after his accession the Hungarians had followed the example of the Bohemians, and at the diet of Besztercze, held under the auspices of Bethlen (1620), deposed him and conferred the crown on the latter. But, unlike the Bohemians, they did not go through with their quarrel to the bitter end. What Ferdinand promised at Nicolsburg he kept. There was no violation of the constitution in his reign, the diets were held, the office of palatine filled,<sup>1</sup> and Hungarian advice prevalent in the affairs

<sup>1</sup> This office was peculiar to Hungary. By the constitutional laws compiled by Verboczy the palatine was the commander of the kingdom's military forces, the mediator, and eventually the judge, between king and the nation, regent of the realm during the sovereign's absence or incapacity. In

of the country. In truth he was a great prince who had a tremendous task laid upon him. He failed in Germany, he fully succeeded in Austria, and he left Hungary as he found it.

The improvement we speak of is shown in the records of the diets of 1622, 1625, 1634, 1647. The grievances were fewer, the debates less acrimonious, the laws passed were numerous, and what is still more important, they did not merely have the raising of new taxes and soldiers in view, but also the promotion of general welfare like the regulations of rivers, the better administration of justice, reforms of the coinage and—characteristic of the economic notions of the period—the establishment of a standard of prices. The old complaint about insufficient protection against the Turks, misbehaviour of the soldiery, arbitrary proceedings of fiscal officials never ceased, but the chief grievances of the time turned on the quarrels between Catholics and Protestants. These, however, cannot be laid at the door of the foreigner. In the great contest between the old and new belief—graphically reviewed in English literature by a master hand<sup>1</sup>—Hungary was one of the debatable countries. But while, from the Pyrenees to the shores of the Danube, the antagonists fought each other with fire and

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reality he had never exercised all these powers, which in the case of the Habsburg kings residing in Vienna would have reduced the crown to a mere title. From 1535 to 1608 the office had only been filled once (1554-1562). But after the Peace of Vienna Illieshazy was elected and the office never left vacant until 1667.

<sup>1</sup> Macaulay's *Essays on Ranke's History of the Popes*.

sword, their quarrels here turned on the non-execution of the laws which granted equal rights and liberties to both. Undoubtedly these laws were frequently violated, churches and property illegally taken away, subject tenants forced to follow their landlords' conversion ; but, compared with the follies and crimes that accompanied the religious struggles in the rest of Europe, these were minor misdeeds. On the whole, the great principle of religious tolerance was recognized and applied in Hungary earlier than anywhere else, and if in the stormy days of its birth it was not always scrupulously respected—and that by either side—the evil sprang from sincere or interested zeal grown on native soil, and not from Austria.

But the calm was on the surface and the respite of short duration. If during the second period of her connection with Austria, Hungary was left relatively alone, it was because her rulers in Vienna had all their power engaged in the Thirty Years' War, and her Turkish aggressors passed through a period of decline. The Peace of Westphalia left Austria exhausted and in need of rest. Emperor Ferdinand III. was in feeble health, tired of war, anxious to avoid troubles. But in Constantinople the advent of a series of forceful grand viziers led to a new period of aggressiveness. The forces which had made for conflict before were again let loose there. As much as ever was Hungary thrown on Austria's assistance, more than ever was she made to realize



that her interests and aspirations were but of secondary importance to her rulers. The bitterness engendered by her new deception, together with the old causes of discontent, led to conspiracies and open rebellion, these in their turn to stern retaliation, and at last to the settled determination to do away with Hungary's constitution altogether and to assimilate her with the Emperor's other provinces. Years of sadness followed, filled with civil war, military rule, and bloody assizes, intersprinkled now and then with feeble attempts at conciliation. It was in those years that it became a common saying that even Allah was better than "Wer da," and that the inborn hatred of the German name, the "*innata Germani nominis aversio*," of which one of Leopold I.'s historians complains, took root in the Hungarian heart. The triumphs and glories of the next war with Turkey produced a partial revulsion of feeling, but their effect was counterbalanced by the events which followed. When Hungary was reconquered, its frontiers restored, the check of Turkish power and Transylvanian assistance removed, the Austrian Ministers again reverted to former methods—with the same result. The constitution was laid aside and the nation made to feel that the foreigner who had helped it had become its master. When the opportunity offered it rose up again. It seems a strange and tragic irony of history that the most troubled period of her relations with Austria should have been the one

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of her final deliverance from the Turkish yoke, and that in the reign of a king who himself was pre-eminently conservative, pacific, and benevolent.

The tide of events was set rolling through the ill-starred ambition of the second George Rakoczi, who had succeeded his father in 1648. He was a prince of masterful disposition and great personal valour, who had inherited his father's love of power and money, but not his prudence and discretion. At home, in his unruly principality, his power was firmly established, but he was eager for aggrandisement, and continually involved in foreign adventures. When Charles Gustavus in 1657 declared war on Poland he joined the Swedes, although this step brought him not only into direct antagonism with the court of Vienna, but menaced him also with the wrath of Turkey. The Emperor was Poland's ally; the Porte, where now grand vizier Mohamed Köprili reigned supreme, did not approve of its vassal's independent policy. The former sent Bishop Szelepchenyi into Rakoczi's camp to persuade him either to return or to make common cause with the Poles, the latter sent him formal orders to keep quiet. Flushed by the fortunate beginning of his campaign, he set persuasion and orders alike aside, and ran into disaster. In June, together with the Swedes, he had entered the Polish capital; two months later his army was annihilated, he himself back in Transylvania, a forlorn fugitive,

with a retinue of about 300 men. Two months more, and letters arrived from Constantinople deposing the disobedient vassal, and ordering the Estates to elect some one else in his place.

It was the beginning of the end, not only of the unfortunate Prince, but of his country as well. The grand vizier was bent on crushing him, and of reducing the state of semi-independence which Transylvania had enjoyed hitherto. In vain did Rakoczi sue for the Sultan's pardon,<sup>1</sup> in vain solicit the Emperor's help; for two years he maintained, single-handed, an uphill fight until he was killed in battle (May 1660), heroically leading 6000 Hungarians against 25,000 Turks. Two puppet Princes were elected at the bidding of the Porte, then a third, John Kemeny, who had been Rakoczi's general in Poland, and tried to make a stand for his country's independence. He, too, fell in battle; and finally another creature of the Turks, one Michael Apaffy, was established as Prince. The country had been laid waste, its tribute raised, the important fortress of Nagy Varad taken; the new Prince was an absolute tool in Turkey's hands,<sup>2</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> The cringing terms he employed, calling himself the Sultan's born slave, are in striking contrast to his predecessor's rôle as champion of Hungarian liberty.

<sup>2</sup> The method of his election was characteristic of the true state of things. When the Turkish Serdar, Ali Pasha, had invaded Transylvania, he looked out for some puppet to invest with the princely dignity. As none of the nobles whom he had first selected would accept it, he asked some Saxon citizens whether they knew any Hungarian gentleman suitable for the purpose. They named Michael Apaffy, who had just returned from Tartar captivity, and was quietly living on his estates. Ali sent for him, ordered as many of the nobility and gentry as he could into his camp, bade them elect

the time seemed near when even the formality of his existence would be dispensed with and Transylvania turned into a Turkish Pachalik.

In Hungary these events were viewed with deep concern. Of her leading men some had not approved of Rakoczi's adventurous policy, others had been in antagonism to him as the champion of the Protestant cause. But when he fell they all felt that Transylvania's danger was their own, and urgently appealed to their young sovereign not to let the sister-country perish. His Austrian advisers, however, had not the least desire for a war with Turkey. They had small reason to sympathize with Rakoczi, whom they had never trusted, and who had made war on their ally. Besides, they had other affairs on hand. Leopold I. had been crowned King of Hungary in his father's lifetime, and had peacefully succeeded to his hereditary dominions, but had yet to win the Imperial crown. In his inheritance he had found the war with Sweden, which lasted three years. Still, the King of Hungary could not quietly sit by and let Transylvania be transformed into a Turkish province. So the Imperial council decided to do something, and when the Peace of Oliva had been concluded, troops were sent to Hungary. But their number was insufficient to prevent the fall of Nagy Varad and the overthrow of Kemeny; while the eagerness of

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Apaffy their prince, and installed him with the emblems of his dignity (September 1661).

Austrian diplomacy to preserve peace only served to swell the arrogance of the Turks and defeated its own purpose.<sup>1</sup>

The war broke out in 1663. The Turks overran Hungary and took the fortress of Ersek Ujvar, a strong and important place, half-way between Buda and Vienna, which had hitherto protected North-Western Hungary from their inroads. But next year the tables were turned, and the battle of St. Gotthard fought and won by Montecuccoli. It was the first signal triumph of the Imperial arms over the Turks, and the hopes of Hungary rose high. Ten days later peace was made on the basis of the *status quo*. The Turks were to keep the fortresses they had taken, while the Hungarians were not even to re-erect the one which Nicholas Zrinyi, their best son, had built, and which had always been a thorn in the Turkish flesh. The only result of the mighty victory was the continuation of Michael Apaffy's washed-out figure on the Transylvanian throne. In every other respect the country was worse off than before the war.

The news of these terms was received with astonishment in all Europe, they evoked severe criticism in Germany, and they filled Hungary with consternation and indignation.<sup>2</sup> It was clear that her deliverance from the Turks did not enter into

<sup>1</sup> Compare for this part of Hungarian history, Szalay, vol. v. chap. 21; Rink, *Leopold der Grosse*, vol. ii. pp. 406-415 and 420-434; and Wolf, *Lobkowitz*, pp. 113-147.

<sup>2</sup> For the impression of the Peace of Vasvár on public opinion see Rink, vol. ii. pp. 471-477; Wolf, p. 132; Pauler, vol. i. pp. 1-5 and 35.

the aims of the Austrian Ministers. What added to the sting was that the country had not been given a voice in the matter. Not a single Hungarian had been consulted during the negotiations,<sup>1</sup> nor was there one attached to Count Leslie's<sup>2</sup> embassy, when a year later he was sent to Constantinople to draw up the final treaty. It was then that men who hitherto, from patriotism, sound reflection, or self-interest, had been the most faithful adherents of the reigning house, who had risen to power and won renown in its service—men like the primate Lippay, the palatine Wesselenyi, the *judex curiae* (Lord Chancellor) Nadasdy, and the two brothers Zrinyi—turned away from it in rage or despair, and began to consider and to plot whether and how they could save their country without it or against it.

The Turkish peace was not the only cause of discontent, in the north-east it was not even the principal one. The thirteen counties into which that region is divided had always been the centre of opposition to the Austrian rule. There the religious question predominated over every other, the fear of the Germans was greater than that of

<sup>1</sup> Immediately after the battle of St. Gotthard grand vizier Ahmed Köprülü had made peace overtures to the Imperial resident Reninger, who was in his camp. The negotiations were carried on in secrecy and concluded in ten days, but the terms of the peace became public only two months later.

<sup>2</sup> Walter Leslie was one of the many foreign adventurers who, during the Thirty Years' War, had risen to wealth and honours in the Austrian service. He was born 1605, a Scottish Catholic, had taken a principal part in Wallenstein's assassination and fought his way up to the rank of Field-Marshal. He was made a Count, Knight of the Golden Fleece, married a Countess Dietrichstein, and died 1667.

the Turks, who up to George Rakoczi's time had been looked upon as eventual protectors.<sup>1</sup> The work of counter-reformation had received a new stimulus through the zeal and energy of his widow—Sophia Bathory. She was the last of a famous race, a woman of strong will, who had become a Protestant on her marriage, but at heart had always remained a Catholic, and had rejoined the old faith after her husband's death, bringing her young son Francis with her into its fold. On her vast estates, which stretched all over Northern Hungary, she devoted herself to undoing all that former Rakoczis had done for Protestantism, and naturally won thereby the favour and confidence of the court in Vienna, but excited against it fully as much as against herself the complaints and clamours of her Protestant compatriots. In 1659, when King Leopold had convoked his first Hungarian diet, their representatives had again consented to postpone their grievances, but three years later they refused to take the Royal propositions for the defence of the country into consideration before obtaining redress, and left the diet in a body, although the war with Turkey was imminent. During the war the attitude of the north-east had been lukewarm and unsatisfactory,<sup>2</sup> and as counter-reformation, legitimate and illegitimate, continued, its irritation grew deeper and louder. The German troops had

<sup>1</sup> Pauler, vol. i. pp. 60-68.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 27-28, 61-62; Wolf, p. 133; Szalay, vol. v. pp. 64-71.

been left in the country, and their presence formed an added grievance. There was unrest, fermentation, and inflammable material everywhere, yet there was nothing to drive the masses to measures of despair, and all the leaders—great and small—felt convinced that nothing could be done without foreign help.

The figure of Leopold I. is well known to every reader of history. During forty-eight eventful years he was one of the foremost monarchs of Europe, and his character has been drawn by contemporaries and historians almost as often and minutely as that of his more brilliant cousin and rival, Lewis XIV.<sup>1</sup> The colours vary according to the political and religious views of the painter, but the main impression the impartial reader receives is the same. It is that of a simple, virtuous, good-natured, dull gentleman with strong convictions—inherited and developed by education, honestly trying to live up

<sup>1</sup> The Venetian envoys at his court, from Nani and Sagredo down to Giustiniani, Contarini, Cornaro, Venier, and Ruzzini, who were shrewd observers, but are not absolutely reliable in their reports, are unanimous in their praise of his justice, clemency, piety, and application to business. Gramont, who met him in Frankfort at his election as Emperor, called him a mild, good-natured, fully informed gentleman. Forty years later another French Ambassador, the Marquis de Villars, described him as a prince of intelligence, honesty, zeal for work, but always distrusting himself as well as others, and relying on miracles. Pfendorff writes likewise. Of French contemporaries, de la Fausle and Chavagnac are more favourable, and decidedly so Freschot in his little book *La Cour de Vienne 1705*. Of modern historians compare the works of Gfrörer, Klopp, Baumstark, and Walewski, who are all very favourable to Leopold I., with those of Droysen, Goedecke, and Noorden, who are hostile, and Cox, *History of the House of Austria*, who tries to be impartial. Of Austrians and Hungarians see Arneth, Wolf, Krones, Schicht, Majlath, and Pauler. Also Heigel, who has written an essay on the Emperor's character in *Die Sitzungsberichte der k. b. Akademie der Wissenschaften*, München, 1890.



to them, but lacking in judgment and still more in initiative and determination. His private life was blameless, in glaring contrast to that of his contemporaries, Lewis XIV. of France and Charles II. of England. As a ruler his way of thinking was the same as that of his French cousin. He was convinced of the divine origin and the absolute nature of his power, at the same time acknowledging that he had obligations towards his subjects and the majesty of his own dignity, without, however, having a clear notion of what they consisted. He was sincerely and deeply pious, yet he attempted to subvert the Hungarian constitution, although in his coronation oath he had solemnly sworn to uphold it. The lustre of his reign is derived from the brilliancy of its military achievements; what darkens it is its treatment of Hungary. The merit of the first belongs to the Emperor's generals and armies; the blame for the second he must share with the statesmen who sat in his council. For with all his hesitation, indecision, and fear of responsibility, Leopold was by no means a mere figure-head. If he was generally guided by the opinions of others, it was by those of a number of advisers political and religious. Unlike their Spanish cousins, the Austrian Habsburgs had no all-powerful favourites. There are no Lerma's and Olivarez in their history. Leopold was no exception to this rule, and the stamp of his personality is impressed alike on his foreign and domestic policy,

although he had invented neither the one nor the other.

As yet, however, he was a timid youth<sup>1</sup> and entirely dependent on his Austrian Ministers. To all of them the Turkish War had come as an unmitigated nuisance. When they had an opportunity to terminate it without loss and with its main end seemingly achieved they seized it. The fear of not receiving sufficient support from Germany, the eventuality of the opening of the Spanish succession,<sup>2</sup> and the Emperor's impending marriage were considerations which weighed in the balance, but even without them their decision was merely guided by the same principles which had ruled the policy of their predecessors for wellnigh a century. They were all men who had lived through the Thirty Years' War and had had their characters and views formed by its storms and results. The House of Austria had emerged from it deprived of all real power in Germany, but absolute master in its own dominions, everywhere but in Hungary. Leopold's Ministers—though in other respects at loggerheads with each other—were all champions of absolute power, and looked with little sympathy and much distrust on a country where medieval liberty and privilege were still in force, and which clung passionately to the right of electing its

<sup>1</sup> He was seventeen when he ascended the throne, twenty-four at the conclusion of the Peace of Vasvár.

<sup>2</sup> Philip IV. was old and in declining health, his two-years-old only son, Charles II., so feeble that he was not expected to live.

kings.<sup>1</sup> No diet was convoked after the war, but in face of the Hungarian discontent their principal men were called to Vienna, where Prince Lobkowitz explained to them the reasons for and the advantages of the peace, and asked them to accept it. They answered that they had neither authority nor wish to do so, expatiated on the sufferings of the country and asked for the recall of the German troops. They received some friendly assurances, but no measures were taken, and they could judge the true temper of the court by the remarks which there, as well as in the camps of the army, were flying through the air, namely, that it was high time to curb the arrogance of their nation, tear down the heron-feathers from their kalpaks, replace the gold buttons on their coats by leaden ones, and put them into Bohemian trousers.

This was the state of things and this the prevailing temper on both sides, which led to that strange and mournful drama well known in history as the conspiracy of Wesselenyi, Nadasdy, and Peter Zrinyi.<sup>2</sup> The men who played the chief part in and paid so heavily for it held the highest offices in the land, owned enormous wealth, had every-

<sup>1</sup> Under the existing circumstances that right had lost all practical value, and all of Ferdinand I.'s successors had been elected without even the semblance of a contest. Still in the eyes of the nation hereditary power was identical with absolute power, and even Nicholas Zrinyi was violently opposed to a change when the idea had been mooted in 1655.

<sup>2</sup> A monograph on it was written shortly after the event by Angelini Bontempi, since then it has been mentioned in every work on Austrian history, but its detail and inward story have been only told in our own time by Wolf and Pauler.

thing to lose and personally but little to gain. Francis Wesselenyi (born 1606) had risen through ability and good fortune to wealth and honours. He had served the Imperial House in the Thirty Years' War, fought in Germany and against George Rakoczi I., had won the hand of Maria Szechy, surnamed the Venus of Murany, and with it this famous castle, had been made a count palatine of the realm, and a knight of the Golden Fleece. Francis Nadasdy (born 1624) had found his wealth and honours in his cradle. He belonged to one of the greatest families of the country, his great-grandfather had been mainly instrumental in securing the Hungarian crown for Ferdinand I.; he himself was made *judex curiae*, the second temporal dignity of the realm, at the age of thirty. Like Wesselenyi, he was born a Protestant, but had become a convert, and a very zealous one too. Peter Zrinyi was a warrior, like all the members of his famous house. He had lived up to its traditions, and early in life had already won renown through deeds of bravery against the Turks. He had succeeded his brother in the office of banus of Croatia, and was the greatest magnate of that country. These were the men who now began to plot how to organize an armed uprising for their country's liberty against Austria.

The undertaking was poorly conceived, and as poorly carried out. In its authors' ideas its pivot turned on obtaining the assistance of a foreign

power. On the point which power it should be they were not agreed; Nadasdy and Zrinyi looked towards France, Wesselenyi towards Turkey, Transylvania, and Poland. In the end they would have been glad to welcome assistance from anywhere, only from nowhere was it to be had. For four years secret negotiations were carried on between the two Hungarian magnates and Lewis XIV.'s Minister in Vienna, the former asking for money and definite assurances, Gremonville manifesting friendly interest, giving advice, a little money too, but never committing his King. The game which Lewis XIV. began to play then he continued during fifty years. It is best characterized by his own words written on a later occasion.<sup>1</sup> In 1675 he wrote to Forbin Janson, his Minister in Poland: "In according rewards to the Hungarian chiefs it is my intention to drive them forward on a path which they have voluntarily entered, and which they are no more free to leave. It is not my intention to accord to them such means that they could thereby sustain their troops." And again, "Although I thought it useful to excite anxiety in Vienna, I do not go so far as to entertain by great expense a war so far away and so little regular as those based on popular revolt generally are." In 1668 an agreement was reached between Austria and France and the secret partition treaty with

<sup>1</sup> *Archivum Francusku in Cracow*, vol. i. pp. 189 and 197, quoted by Ono Klopp in his work on the siege of Vienna in 1683, p. 47.

regard to the Spanish succession signed, and then Gremonville told the Hungarians that nothing could be done for them at present. They fared still worse at Constantinople. Not only had Ahmed Köprili no intention to renew the war for their sake, but the court of Vienna learnt of all their missions and machinations through the Porte's chief interpreter Panajotti. The schemes for putting a French prince on the Polish throne and obtaining that country's alliance proved equally castles in the air, and Apaffy, who never moved but at the open or secret bidding of the Porte, was afraid of adventures, and confined his assistance to sending envoys to Constantinople.

In the meanwhile agitation and conspiracy went on at home. The chiefs and the crowd of minor men who stood in the second rank met in their castles, at watering-places, at public assemblies. Pledges of federation were exchanged, violent speeches made, complaints and protestations sent to Vienna. Deeds of violence were committed, disorder and anarchy reigned, but no organized action was taken. There was no real leader. Nicholas Zrinyi, the one man who had possessed the requisite qualities and the moral authority for such a part, had died a few months after the peace. Wesselenyi had many brilliant qualities, but neither the constancy of resolution nor the grasp of mind to deal with extraordinary emergencies, besides he was wavering, easily ruled by the advice of others

and the impressions of the moment. Fortunately for himself he died in April 1667, long before the crisis came. Nadasdy had rare intelligence, but was more a man of schemes and intrigues than of action, playing a double game, running after popularity as well as after the favour of the court, aiming at the palatinate, hoping one day to become the peacemaker between the King and nation. Peter Zrinyi was hot-headed, short-sighted, quarrelsome, always acting on the spur of the moment, and pushed on by his ambitious wife Catherine Frangipani.

There was a man in Upper Hungary whom all outward circumstances seemed to point out for a leading part in the movement. That was young Francis Rakoczi I. But his mother's bigoted zeal had turned the feeling of the Protestants for his house into hatred and distrust. What weighed still heavier in the balance was the fact that he had none of the gifts of a leader of men. In four successive generations he was the only insignificant head of his historic house. At the age of seven he had been elected Prince of Transylvania; after his father's fall he had lived quietly with his mother in Hungary; five years later he had married Peter Zrinyi's daughter Ilona, celebrated for her beauty and misfortunes. The influence of herself and her parents prevailed over that of his mother; he joined the movement but never led it.

Things came to a head at the beginning of 1670. Zrinyi had decided to raise the standard of open

revolt.<sup>1</sup> He had sent an agent to Turkey to ask for assistance and offer his allegiance in return. The reports he received were encouraging; he and his brother-in-law Frangipani armed their retainers and prepared for an inroad into Styria. Rapidly the news spread through Northern Hungary together with rumours that Zrinyi had concluded an alliance with Turkey and was sure of its assistance. Rakoczi likewise took to arms and began hostilities by arresting the Emperor's commander in Tokay, Count Starhemberg,<sup>2</sup> who had come to pay him a visit. But the rumours proved false and the Hungarian fire, for once, one of straw. When the Imperial troops arrived, no serious resistance was made. Rakoczi's troops dispersed, he himself fled to the castle of his mother, who at once began to negotiate for his pardon. In the south the movement never had any deep root, and Zrinyi and Frangipani could make no stand against the Austrian generals; finding their escape cut off east and north they saw their only chance of safety lay in the Emperor's mercy, and rushed to Vienna to sue for it (April 1670). No Hungarian uprising before or since has ever so pitifully collapsed.

<sup>1</sup> In the preceding summer he had been in Vienna seemingly anxious to make his peace with the powers there. Two important commandships had fallen vacant, and he aspired to either the one or the other. Obtaining neither, he left more enraged than ever, and resolved on the final step. But even then he was wavering, and as late as February 1670, while he was negotiating with the Turks, he wrote to Lobkowitz offering his services to the Emperor or asking for an exchange of his estates in Croatia against others in Austria (Pauler, vol. i. pp. 323-325).

<sup>2</sup> It was the same Starhemberg who afterwards won undying renown by his defence of Vienna in 1683.



Great had been the anxiety in Vienna, great now was the joy over a success seemingly so complete and so easily achieved. What in the past force, genius, and artifice had endeavoured in vain, Leopold had achieved with small effort and hardly any bloodshed.<sup>1</sup> Hungary seemed to lie prostrate at his feet. The question was what to do with it. The opinion was general in Austria that not only should severe punishment be meted out to all the leaders of the late rebellion, but that the whole government of the country should be put on a new basis.

Nadasdy, Zrinyi, and Frangipani died on the scaffold (April 30, 1671). Such in all likelihood would have been their fate in any other country. Cinq Mars and de Thou in France were sent to the block for no more, Algernon Sidney in England for far less than what they had done. Their sad fate, exalted rank, and the troubles of their time have recommended their memory to the pitiful sympathy of their nation, subsequent events and the mode of their trial have lent it a halo of martyrdom which their lives and deeds do not warrant. As Hungarian peers the jurisdiction over them belonged to the Parliament, or at least to the supreme court of their country. They were tried in Austria by a special court created for the purpose, composed of Austrians alone, judging after foreign

<sup>1</sup> These are the words of the Venetian envoy Giorgi, see Fielder, *Relationen der Botschafter Venedigs*, vol. ii. p. 124 (*Fontes rerum Austriacarum*, vol. xxvii.)

law. Legal arguments were not wanting,<sup>1</sup> but they were mainly employed for the colouring of a settled determination, for the Austrian Ministers had no intention of convoking a diet, nor did they care to bring the three offenders before a court where the judges might turn into their advocates.<sup>2</sup>

Special commissions were created in Hungary for the trial of the minor culprits. By the end of 1670 about two thousand of the nobility and gentry had been arrested; the value of their sequestered estates was estimated at 3 million florins. The prosecutions and trials lasted wellnigh a year. Of the capital sentences only one was carried out, but imprisonments and confiscations were numerous. Thanks to his mother's influence, Rakoczi was let off with a fine. The bartering about its amount was long and tenacious, the council in Vienna<sup>3</sup> asking at first 2 million, the old Princess offering 100,000 florins. At last the bargain was struck at 400,000.<sup>4</sup>

"I will make use of the opportunity and arrange things differently in Hungary," so wrote the Emperor to his Ambassador in Madrid in May 1670. And a year later, "The Hungarians are now pretty quiet,

<sup>1</sup> They had been received into the ranks of the Austrian nobility; Nadasy owned estates in Austria, Zrinyi and Frangipani were soldiers, Nadasy and Zrinyi had plotted in Austria against Austria during the Emperor's wedding, all three had been arrested on Austrian soil.

<sup>2</sup> Notes of Montecucoli in the archives of the War Department in Vienna, August 25, 1670.

<sup>3</sup> It consisted of Lobkowitz, Count Sinzendorf, Hoher, and a Mr. Selb, one of the officials of the Treasury.

<sup>4</sup> 200,000 in cash, 150,000 in provisions, and 50,000 in land.

and I hope to put everything soon into a different shape." The thought which the Emperor thus uttered lay in the air.<sup>1</sup> Whether it was Prince Lobkowitz or Baron Hoher who first conceived it cannot be established; what is certain is that they gave it life and shape.<sup>2</sup>

Wenzel Lobkowitz<sup>3</sup> was then the foremost man in the Emperor's councils. A great lord by birth, a soldier, diplomatist and courtier by profession, a champion of absolute power by conviction, he belonged to that class of princely statesmen whose greatest representative is Richelieu, and who were the main instruments in working out the transformation of medieval into modern society by the abolition of feudal liberty and privilege and the establishment of a strong central authority. Brilliant and sarcastic, rich in experience, firmly believing in himself, he yet had none of the genius and foresight of his great models in France. His foreign policy was feeble and waver-

<sup>1</sup> We meet it in numerous memorials, propositions, and letters written by well-known and anonymous authors of the day.

<sup>2</sup> For the history of subsequent events see Wolf, pp. 339-355, and the essay of Karolyi, Director of the Archives in Vienna, "On the suspension of the Hungarian constitution."

<sup>3</sup> Born in 1609. In the stormy days of his youth his father had been unwaveringly faithful to the House of Habsburg. The son followed in his footsteps, raised and commanded a regiment at the age of 22, became Lieutenant-General in 1640, and a few years later Privy Councillor. After that he was mostly employed in diplomatic missions, was made Field-Marshal in 1647 and President of the Board of War in 1652. At Frankfort he led the negotiations for Leopold's election as Emperor. After Prince Portia's death (1665) he became Lord Grand Master of the Court (Obersthofmeister); after Prince Auersperg's fall (1669) first Privy Councillor and virtually Prime Minister. In 1674 he fell into disgrace, was summarily dismissed from all his offices, banished from court, and died at his castle of Raudnitz in 1679. His life has been written by Adam Wolf.

ing. True to the Austrian traditions, he wanted peace with Turkey at almost any price; deviating from them, he worked for an understanding with Lewis XIV., which would have placed Austria in the same position as Charles II. had accepted for England, and which ultimately led to his fall. With regard to Hungary, he marched without scruples and hesitation towards his aim.

More in the background, but of hardly less weight, was the influence of Paul Hoher.<sup>1</sup> He was a true child of his time. Of modest birth, he owed his rise to his talents, industry, and usefulness. A typical representative of the then nascent bureaucracy, he was a stupendous worker, incorruptible, inaccessible, faithful, and discreet, but rough, slow, and dull. A Venetian envoy remarks<sup>2</sup> that his want of breeding was visible in his appearance and manners, and that his speech betrayed that he had learnt what he knew in school and not at court. His political theories were based on the Roman law, and were the same as those of Hobbes. He was the staunchest enemy of Hungary's constitution and historical rights.

<sup>1</sup> John Paul Hoher (born 1616) was the son of a professor in Freiburg. In 1635 he fled before the Swedes to Innsbruck, where he at first practised law. He entered the service of the Archducal Government, exchanged it for the Imperial service in 1662, and four years later became Chancellor of Austria. It was Lobkowitz who proposed him for the office, remarking to the Emperor that his abilities were preferable to the splendour of noble birth. He rapidly won the confidence of Leopold I., and kept it till his death (1683). The most important affairs passed through his hands, and especially in Hungarian matters his influence was paramount.

<sup>2</sup> Michieli.

No diet had been held since 1662, the palatine's office had not been filled since Wesselenyi's death, and taxes were imposed on the country by royal decree. Now Lobkowitz laid a memorial before the Emperor, wherein he explained that the cause of all troubles in Hungary lay in the nature of its government, which might have been appropriate to other times, but did not suit the exigencies of the present. He proposed to abolish the office of palatine, to revise all the laws of the country, and to concentrate all power—political, military, financial, and judicial—in the hands of an appointed governor and council.<sup>1</sup>

The deliberations in Vienna were long and painstaking. The Emperor had scruples. The question was laid before theologians and jurists whether Hungary had rebelled as a nation and thereby forfeited her rights and privileges.<sup>2</sup> It was answered in the affirmative. Conferences of the leading statesmen were held to decide whether a public declaration ought to be made for the purpose, whether the governor should be a German or a Hungarian, and to draw up in detail his instructions. No Hungarian took part in these deliberations. It was rightly judged that every one of them, even the most loyal, even those who were to receive a seat in the new governing board, would oppose the plan. When everything

<sup>1</sup> See the text of this memorial and the instructions issued by the Emperor in Karoly's essay, the latter also in Wolf, p. 340.

<sup>2</sup> "An Hungaria rebellaverit in forma universitatis."

was prepared, the appointment of a German of princely rank decided, and John Caspar Ampringen, the Grand Master of the Order of Teutonic Knights, selected for the office, it became necessary to obtain the Primate's resignation of his functions as lord-lieutenant, which he had exercised since the vacancy of the palatinate. He raised a spirited protest, and declared that the introduction of the new government was impossible unless the King abolished all the laws and liberties of the country, which he was bound by oath to maintain. Before him, on another occasion, the Hungarian Chancellor, Bishop Palfy, had urged the convocation of a diet, for which the times were propitious, and which alone could work out the necessary reforms. But Count Forgach, also one of the loyal magnates and Nadasdy's successor as *judex curiae*, had hit the nail on the head when in his cynical way he had told a deputation of citizens, who had asked for his intervention against the new taxes, that power and strength make short work of arguments.<sup>1</sup> On February 27, 1673, the royal patent establishing the new order of things appeared, and a month later Ampringen was solemnly installed in his office.

But the fruit of all these long deliberations and efforts was a still-born child. In itself there was nothing abnormal in the desire which then

<sup>1</sup> He had put it more drastically, "*Potestas et fortitudo merdunt rationibus super collum.*"

prevailed in Vienna. The same forces were at work everywhere on the Continent of Europe. Had the circumstances been reversed, the case most likely would have been the same. A Hungarian king ruling from Buda over Austria would as probably have striven to make his rule uniform and to establish a great Danubian power. He certainly would have stood for the extension of royal authority, and whether Catholic or Protestant, would have followed the principle in force then everywhere—"cujus est regio ejus et religio." But an undertaking like this could only succeed either by the consent of the governed or by the employment of force overwhelming and continuous. Austria as yet had done nothing to win the affections of the Hungarians, and her Ministers miscalculated the importance of their triumph when they thought that they had broken the spirit of the country. In reality their hold over it depended on the constellations of their foreign relations. These had been favourable in 1671, but were now on the point of turning against them.

Ampringen himself has left no mark on Hungarian history. He seems to have been an honest, well-meaning man, moderate and fair in his views.<sup>1</sup> But his powers were on paper. That the Hun-

<sup>1</sup> Very little is known of Ampringen's personality. Schlosser's *Allgemeine Geschichte*, vol. xiii. p. 280, and Horvath, *Hungarian History*, vol. ii. p. 280, give rather an unfavourable account of him, calling him lazy, fond of drink, and brutal. He must certainly have had other qualities to recommend him to men like Lobkowitz and Hochoy, and his despatches to the Emperor in the Vienna archives show that his feelings were not brutal and justify the judgment above.

garians should keep aloof from him was natural, for they hated the whole innovation. What was worse for the object of his mission was that the Austrian generals also paid no attention to his authority. Nor were his advice and complaints listened to in Vienna. It seemed as if with the fall of Lobkowitz the spirit had gone out of the new institution. In vain did Ampringen try to work for the protection of the common people and the maintenance of discipline amongst the Imperial troops, in vain did he raise his voice against the persecutions of the Protestants and for the re-establishment of confidence between crown and nation.<sup>1</sup> Thoroughly disgusted with his office he left Pozsony in 1677 never to return.

The resistance the absolute government had met was not merely a passive one. Many of the men who had been implicated in Francis Rakoczi I.'s uprising had fled to Turkish territory or into Transylvania, where they received moral sympathy and underhand succour. They began by organizing a guerilla warfare, and already, in 1672, were able to make an inroad into North-Eastern Hungary and collect 15,000 men around them. Their opportunities improved when the Emperor went to war with France in the next year. The movement gained in strength and extent when the religious persecutions began, and when the Primate cited the Protestant preachers before his tribunal and gave

<sup>1</sup> Wolf, pp. 355-359 ; Karolyi, pp. 65-68.



them the choice between renunciation, emigration, and the galleys. For the next twenty years the unfortunate country was the scene of an internecine struggle, which entailed upon its inhabitants sufferings and horrors comparable only with those that Germany had undergone during the Thirty Years' War.<sup>1</sup> The fortunes of warfare flowed forward and backward, but whether it were the kurucz—for it was in those days that the champions of the national cause took that name and called their compatriots, who remained loyal to the reigning house, labancz—who made themselves masters of forts, towns, or open country, or the Imperial soldiers who retook them, the result for the inhabitants was the same, namely, executions varied with tortures, pillage, and ransom. And when for a short time the antagonists laid down their arms, and kurucz and labancz caroused together, it was still at the expense of the common people, as a contemporary chronicler remarks.

Doubts now arose in Vienna as to the wisdom of the measures taken. It was evident that the Ampringen regime had not produced the expected results. Three years after its institution the first attempts at conciliation were made, amnesty and free exercise of the Protestant religion being offered to the kurucz. Shortly afterwards the Emperor called some of the loyal magnates to Vienna to consult

<sup>1</sup> Katona, the historian of Hungary, says of those times that he not only shudders at but abhors their sad memory (xxxiv. p. 205).

with them about the pacification of the country. They all, and Ampringen with them, advised the election of a palatine, withdrawal of German troops, appointment of Hungarian commanders in towns and fortresses, and altogether a return to constitutional ways. The Austrian Ministers were of opinion that one might as well expect to save a ship from being wrecked by throwing the wheel overboard. But their own prescriptions were of as little effect, and in spite of General Kopp's draconic measures, the insurrection grew more formidable every year. On the instigation of Lewis XIV., Apaffy began to show his sympathy in a more active way, and in 1677 a treaty of alliance was concluded between him and the Hungarian insurgents, under the auspices of the French Minister in Poland, by which each side was to bring 15,000 men into the field, France to furnish the money, and the Prince's Prime Minister to take the command.

Deliberations, conferences, and negotiations continued during the next four years. Every Hungarian consulted saw the only hope for peace in the re-establishment of the legal order of things. Hoher still held out. The choice of this person for the management of things was certainly an unfortunate one. At Pozsony he told the Hungarian delegates with whom he conferred that their whole nation was one of rebels. The men whom he thus insulted had seen their estates laid waste by the

kurucz, and knew that their lives would be in danger if they fell into their hands. Bishop Palfy answered in tones of befitting indignation, and the conference broke up. Then the Primate asked the kurucz leaders to name their conditions. When they had done so the Peace of Nymwegen was concluded, and they were told that they had to lay down their arms before their wishes could be considered. But the peace with France was precarious, and a new war-cloud was rising in the East. The final outcome of all these forward and backward moves was that the absolute government was abolished, the constitution re-established, and a diet called for 1681. In Vienna the desire for conciliation was sincere.<sup>1</sup> But in Hungary the lead had passed into the hands of a man who had his own aims, and these could only be attained by war.

It would be an injustice to the men who have led Hungarian revolutions before and after him to put Emerich Tóköli<sup>2</sup> on the same level with them. He was not a far-seeing statesman like Bocskay,

<sup>1</sup> For the history of the events described above, and those to follow, see Szalay, vol. v. pp. 148-228, and Ono Klopp's masterly work on *The Turkish War of 1683*.

<sup>2</sup> Born 1657. His great-grandfather had enriched himself as a horse-dealer, distinguished himself at the reconquest of Győr (1598), been made a baron, and through his marriage with Susan Doczi allied himself to some of the greatest families of the country. His grandfather further added to the importance of the family by marrying a lady of the family of Thurzo, and by his fidelity to Ferdinand II. His father was made a count, but became implicated in the Wesselenyi Nadasdy conspiracy, and died in his stronghold of Arva, while Count Esterhazy was laying siege to it in the name of the Emperor (1670). Count Emerich then fled to Transylvania, where he grew up amongst the exiles, and where his wealth and talents soon put him into the front rank. In 1678 they elected him their leader, and their movement at once gained in energy and definiteness.

nor an unselfish patriot like Francis Rakoczi II. The type he resembles is that of the Italian condottieri of the Renaissance period. He was brave and cunning, and possessed the faculties for action and the gifts for command. But the aim of all his ambition was to carve out of the Hungarian territory, still free from the Turkish yoke, another semi-independent principality for himself. For this end he continued the rebellion and made himself the tool of Turkey.<sup>1</sup> His intellectual error was as great as his moral wrong. Had he succeeded, the fate of Hungary would, in all likelihood, have been the same as that which Serbia and Bulgaria suffered. It is true that he flattered himself with the hope of being able, with the aid of France, ultimately to play false to his Turkish protectors. All three, King Lewis XIV., the new grand vizier, and Tököli, were working together with the idea of making use of each other. Only it might have been clear to the latter that he, being the weakest of the three, would finally pay the cost of the game, no matter how it turned. Fortunately for his country, although unfortunately for himself, he pinned his faith to the losing side and went down with Turkey.

As yet, however, he had not unveiled his plans. He refused to come to the diet at Soprony, but

<sup>1</sup> Formally he was Turkey's ally, had been invested by the Sultan with the title of King of Upper Hungary, and later appointed Prince of Transylvania. But the real esteem in which allies and henchmen like him were held by the Turks is shown by the words of the Sultan's envoy, Sulfikar, to the Austrian commissioners when they asked for his surrender, "Tököli is the Sultan's cur, about whose life or death the Porte does not care much, but the embassy has not come to Vienna in order to kill him."

he continued to negotiate with the Imperial Government. He even went with the Emperor's Commissioner, Baron Saponara, to the Pasha of Buda, ostensibly to mediate for peace, in reality to obtain from the Sultan his nomination as King of Upper Hungary. What was uppermost in his mind at the time was his marriage with Rakoczi's widow, Helena Zrinyi, and as the Emperor was the guardian of her children and their immense fortune, they both wished to conclude their alliance with his consent.

In the meanwhile the danger of a new war with Turkey approached nearer. In Vienna the Emperor and his council feared it, but did not fully understand its nature. They attributed it entirely to the machinations of Lewis XIV., whereas Kara Mustapha had been resolved on aggression ever since he had succeeded Ahmed Köprili as grand vizier (1676). Wishing for peace, the Imperial Ministers hoped to maintain it through measures of conciliation, and thus repeated the mistake which their predecessors had made twenty years ago. They sent Count Caprera on a special mission to Constantinople, and they obtained the Emperor's consent to Tököli's marriage.<sup>1</sup> The new Ambassador soon informed his senders that the only

<sup>1</sup> The main motive for the conciliatory attitude towards Tököli was the hope to gain his effective mediation with the Porte. But the Imperial Ministers also feared that if the Emperor withheld his consent, Tököli and Helen Rakoczi would marry without it, and finally they saw in this marriage a welcome brand of discord between Tököli and Apaffy's Minister, Teleky, to whose daughter the former had been engaged before.

chance to avert war was to prepare for it, and as an introduction to knock Tököli on the head. On June 15, 1682, the latter's wedding took place. Nine days later he denounced the armistice, took Kassa and Fülek by force of arms, and issued a proclamation announcing his alliance with Turkey, accusing the Emperor of playing false to the nation, ordering a general uprising, and threatening those who would not join him with forfeiture of their lives and estates. And when the representatives of the countries whom he had called to vote the supplies demurred, he repeated his orders in sterner tones, and told them that he was their prince and master and would himself fix the contributions.<sup>1</sup> While he was speaking these words (May 1683) the Sultan was at Belgrade with an army of 250,000 men, which Kara Mustapha was to lead on Vienna.

The events which follow belong to the world's history. Before the walls of Vienna the conquering power of Turkey was finally broken, and the tide which during three centuries had menaced Christian civilization not only stemmed but pushed back. During six years the Imperial armies marched from victory to victory, from conquest to conquest, Buda, the old capital of Hungary, was reconquered, the ties which bound Transylvania to Turkey severed, Belgrade taken, Bosnia occupied. In 1689 the Imperial eagles were planted on the walls of Nisz

<sup>1</sup> Szalay, vol. v. p. 253.

on the south-eastern frontier of Servia, the road to Constantinople seemed open, and in the Imperial council the question was discussed whether the war should be continued until the Turks were driven out of Europe.<sup>1</sup> Then, again, a new war broke out with France and arrested further progress in the East.

Complicated indeed was the position of Leopold I., manifold and conflicting the rights, interests, and obligations springing therefrom. He wore the Imperial crown, he was, or considered himself, the heir to the Spanish line of his house, and he was King of Hungary. Lewis XIV. likewise claimed the Spanish succession for himself or his house, and he had not abandoned the hope of securing the reversion of the Imperial crown, which he had failed to win in 1658. His attitude with regard to the Turkish War was dominated by the hope that Vienna would fall, the House of Austria finally go down, and Germany then turn to him as the bulwark of Christianity.<sup>2</sup> In Vienna he was considered a more dangerous and irreconcilable enemy than Turkey.<sup>3</sup> The Peace of Nymwegen had proved but a hollow

<sup>1</sup> See the memorial of Count Jörger on the subject of November 1, 1689, reprinted in full in Klopp, p. 453.

<sup>2</sup> Klopp, pp. 58-70 and 263.

<sup>3</sup> On the 11th of August 1682 a great council was held in Vienna, where the question of war against France or Turkey was discussed. The view prevailed that the former was the more dangerous enemy, that arrangements with Turkey had more stability than those with Lewis XIV., that what was lost in the East might be won back in time, whereas a useful and safe peace with the French king was impossible, and even an insecure one only obtainable by the annulment of the alliances recently concluded with Holland, Spain, and Sweden.

truce. Shortly after it Lewis XIV. had begun his so-called reunions, taken Strassburg in time of peace, laid siege to Luxemburg. Now (1688) he sent his army across the Rhine to invade the Palatinate. In the same year the great revolution occurred in England, and in the coming spring the alliance between the Emperor and William of Orange was concluded. The troops were withdrawn from Hungary and Servia and sent to the Rhine; a reflux of Turkish aggression followed. Belgrade was retaken, Buda in danger, but further advance arrested by the Margrave of Baden's victory at Salankemen (1691). The Emperor then was desirous to make peace, but the Turks would not finally give up what they had lost. The Imperial troops being too feeble in number, the Turks too exhausted and demoralized, the war stagnated. In 1697 the Peace of Ryswick was concluded, and in the same year the victory of Zenta was won by Prince Eugen. It led to the Peace of Carlowitz, on the basis of actual possession. A strip of Hungary—the banate of Temesvar—remained in Turkey's power, to be reconquered twenty years later. Otherwise the unity of the kingdom was restored and its frontiers drawn as they have remained ever since.

Deep had been the impression of the Christian victories, great the rejoicing over the reconquest of Buda. But by the time that the final peace was concluded the effects of these feelings had vanished, sullen discontent reigned in Hungary, the irritation



on both sides was as great as in the decades preceding the war.<sup>1</sup>

The spirit of conciliation which had prevailed in Vienna in 1681 did not die at once when the danger had passed. It manifested itself in the general amnesty offered in 1684, and three years later in the convocation of a diet which was to vote the reforms deemed most urgent or desirable. When the Imperial forces had retreated before Kara Mustapha's overwhelming numbers and everything seemed lost, many of the loyal nobles and counties had submitted to the Turks or even joined them. They now returned to their true allegiance, and in the ensuing campaigns the Hungarians took their share. About 25,000 of them fought in the royal ranks, many of them, like Batthyany, Nadasdy, the two Bercsenyis, father and son, and Bottjan, achieving distinction. Tököli still held out, continuing to play the part of a sovereign prince by the Sultan's grace, issuing manifestos and addresses, and resorting to persecution and violence.<sup>2</sup> But for all that his

<sup>1</sup> For the history of this period see, of Hungarian authors, *Histoire des Révolutions*, Szalay, vols. v. vi. chaps. 21, 22; Acsady, *Hungary under the Reign of Leopold I.*; Thaly, *Life of Bercsenyi*, vol. ii.; Salamon, *Hungary under Turkish Conquest*. Of Austrians, Arneth, *Life of Starhemberg and of Prince Eugen*; Kiopp, Maurer, *Life of Kollonics*, Innsbruck, 1887; Krones, *Archiv für österr. Geschichte*, vol. xlii., 1870; also *Fontes rerum Austriacarum*.

<sup>2</sup> When the garrison of Fulek surrendered (1682), its commander, Count Stephen Kohary, had refused to sign the capitulation and called Tököli to his face a slave of Turkey. For this Tököli kept him in a dungeon for two years, until he was delivered by the Imperial troops. His behaviour on this occasion has earned him the surname of the "ever faithful." Whether Tököli had actually beheaded Count Homonnay, who had accepted the Emperor's amnesty, as his contemporary Szirmay tells, is doubted by Szalay, vol. v. p. 284. Engel tells that he sent also the two sons of Count Barkoczy to the block, and Ketteler that fifteen Hungarian magnates were impaled by his orders.

cause was down. In the course of 1685 North-Eastern Hungary was recovered for the King, its towns and fortresses surrendered: Munkacs alone, the great stronghold of the Rakoczis, which Tököli's wife defended, held out.

It was unfortunate that the effect of the Emperor's conciliatory disposition should have been marred by the senseless cruelty of one of his generals. The elation over the triumph of Buda was still at its height when General Caraffa held those bloody assizes at Eperjes (February–May 1687) which to this day are spoken of in Hungary, like those of Jeffreys in England. The responsibility for them belongs to Caraffa alone, and cannot be laid at the door of the Emperor or his advisers in Vienna. On the random gossip of some camp-following women he had imagined that he had discovered the threads of a widespread conspiracy, written to Vienna, urged the necessity of repression, asked for instructions, and received the answer to proceed according to Hungarian law, and to remember that nobody was to be called to account for acts covered by the amnesty. Thereupon he constituted a special tribunal, of which he named the judges, and himself took the chair. It proceeded after no law at all, but simply sent those whom it had cited as accused to the block. In three sittings sixteen of the wealthiest landowners and citizens were condemned to death. When the Palatine Esterhazy remonstrated against these persecutions, Caraffa went so

far in his madness as to throw suspicions on his loyalty and even that of the Margrave of Baden—the President of the Board of War. Then orders came from Vienna to stop further proceedings.<sup>1</sup>

The scaffold still stood in Eperjes when the Diet assembled at Pozsony. The shadow it has left behind it has been used to cast a doubt on the vote of the latter. Contemporaries, who were dissatisfied with the establishment of heredity and the abolition of the right of armed resistance, and who shortly afterwards tried to declare them invalid, pretended that the Diet had voted them under intimidation. Later historians have repeated the accusation. In reality, the representatives of the country at Pozsony had no more to fear from Caraffa than from the guns of the fortress, of which it was also pretended that they were turned on their houses of meeting.\* Whichever way they may have been placed, it is certain that they would not have been fired off, and that the Hungarian Parliament did not vote the royal propositions from fear of being blown up. Unpopular the latter undoubtedly were, in spite of the gratitude owed and felt for the country's

<sup>1</sup> With regard to Caraffa, Austrian and foreign writers agree with Hungarian ones. Already Rink says that the whole conspiracy has been invented by him (i. 199); Vico, his compatriot and panegyrist, that in matters of high treason he took his suspicions for facts. And Arneth, the well-known, meritorious, and highly patriotic historian, declares it "highly regrettable that the splendour of the Emperor's victories should have been tarnished by Caraffa's cruelty against the partakers in a conspiracy which had hardly ever existed" (*Life of Guido Starhemberg*).

<sup>2</sup> The members of both houses discussed the proceedings of the tribunal of Eperjes in all freedom and without any restraint of language, and insisted on its abolition.

liberation. Strong pressure was used to get them passed, but it was not different in its nature from the means employed at all times and in all countries by Governments on reluctant assemblies.

The two constitutional amendments which have made the Diet of 1687 an epoch-making one were wise and opportune. For one hundred and sixty years the question whether the crown was hereditary or elective had divided king and nation. That the former now asked the latter to settle it was in itself an acknowledgment of its rights. But the election had ceased to be a reality. Had it remained so, Hungary would hardly have escaped the fate of Poland. As for the right of armed resistance, which the barons of the thirteenth century had wrung from King Andreas II., it is clear that in theory it was subversive of all law and order, and that in practice its value depended on the power of those who tried to exercise it, and not on its being embodied in Article XXXI. of the Golden Bull. That article had not saved Nadasdy and Zrinyi from the block; its absence would not have prevented Bocskay from becoming a prince. No such law had existed in England, where both Oliver Cromwell and Monmouth had carried arms against their kings—with what different results history tells.

But the Hungarians of 1687 were still rooted with their feelings and their views in the Middle Ages. To them the sacrifice seemed great. What they saw above all was the loss of a privilege and

the assimilation of some of their institutions with those of Austria; what they feared was that these first steps would lead to others, and finally to the establishment of absolute rule. Subsequent events proved that these fears were not groundless.

Lobkowitz, Montecucoli, and Hoher were slumbering in their graves, but their ideas and aspirations had not died with them. Now they gained new vigour from the Imperial victories. In Austria the opinion was general that the Emperor had reconquered Hungary with German blood and money from Turks and rebels, that, therefore, he could endow it with such institutions as he pleased, and that he yielded far too much when he asked the Estates to crown his son, and allowed the latter to take the oath on the constitution.<sup>1</sup> Leopold I. did not act on these views, but in his opening speech he declared that he had an undoubted right to do so. His principal Ministers of the day, Prince Dietrichstein,<sup>2</sup> the Margrave Hermann of Baden,<sup>3</sup> and Strattmann,<sup>4</sup> were not

<sup>1</sup> Rink, p. 851

<sup>2</sup> Prince Ferdinand Dietrichstein was Obersthofmeister from 1682 to 1698. He too thought that Hungary ought to be governed like the hereditary countries (Maurer, *Life of Kollonics*, p. 447). But although he held the highest office in the Empire and presided at the Cabinet conferences, he was not a man who cared to assert himself. For his mild and retiring disposition see the description of Venier of 1692 in *Fontes*, vol. xxvii. p. 313.

<sup>3</sup> He chiefly had advocated a conciliatory policy towards Tököli, and had even been accused by Caraffa of partiality for the pretended Hungarian conspirators.

<sup>4</sup> One of Leopold's ablest Ministers, who had succeeded Hoher as Chancellor of Austria in 1683. He too was a foreigner by birth, who had neither connections nor protections in Austria, and owed his rise and position to his talents and their appreciation by the Emperor. Like Hoher, he had great capacity for work; unlike him, he was not merely a jurist but a statesman

men of an uncompromising nature; the two former were always more inclined to moderation than to thoroughgoing measures. But they were men more apt to follow a current than to stem or direct it. The man who has left the stamp of his individuality on the times was Cardinal Kollonics.<sup>1</sup>

The figure of the illustrious cardinal appears in a different light according as to whether it is seen from the west or the east of the river Leitha. That Kollonics was a churchman of unbounded zeal, charity, courage and self-sacrifice, friends and foes acknowledge. The hundreds of orphans of whom he took care, the poor amongst whom he distributed his inheritance, the unfortunate women whom he saved from being burned as witches, the pestilence-stricken parishioners in

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and diplomatist, a man of the world, amiable and polite. The guiding motive of his political activity was zeal for his Imperial master's interests and greatness. Through the marriage of his daughter (who was famous for her beauty) with Count Batthany, he became personally connected with Hungary, where he had received the indigénat (1687). He died in 1693. For his life and character see the account of Corvins and Venier in *Foetes*, also cited by Arneth Prince Eugen, pp. 453 and 454, and an article of Schlotter in *Biographisches Lexicon*.

<sup>1</sup> Born in 1631 of an old and illustrious family, page of Ferdinand IV. at the age of fourteen, a Knight of the Order of St. John five years later, he took part in the Candian expeditions against the Turks, 1651 and 1655, when he distinguished himself by his bravery. When the bishopric of Nyitra became vacant in 1666, Leopold I. singled him out for it, although he had not yet been ordained a priest. He forthwith entered into the political strife of the day, and already then was looked upon as a standard-bearer of Imperial power. Three years later, in order to facilitate conciliation, he exchanged his diocese for the Austrian one of Wiener Neustadt. In 1674 he was made a member of the Amprungen Government, President of the Hungarian Treasury, and during twelve years administered the finances of Hungary. In 1685 he became Bishop of Győr, 1686 Cardinal, 1688 Archbishop of Kalocsa, 1695 of Esztergom and Primate of Hungary. From 1688 on he exercised a leading influence on Hungarian affairs. He died in 1706. For his biography see Maurer, also Krones' essay in *Handbuch für österr. Geschichte*.

whose midst he remained bear evidence to those qualities. But his historical activity was political, not ecclesiastical; its field lay in Hungary, and there it was most resolutely hostile to all that was dearest to the nation. The reforms he meant to introduce, beneficent as some of them would have been, were no offset to the loss of national existence and constitutional liberty.

Of reconstruction Hungary certainly stood in need. On no Christian country had the curse of Ottoman conquest fallen with such heavy weight.<sup>1</sup> For 160 years Turkish Hungary had been debatable ground, where border warfare, inroads, and depredations were continuous. The now-recovered parts were a wilderness, wide tracts of land were uninhabited, boroughs and villages had disappeared, once flourishing towns lay in dirt and ruins.<sup>2</sup> In the rest of the country progress had been arrested by civil strife and the ever-present Turkish danger, justice was slow and uncertain, administration lame, the sources of revenue scanty and unjust, the way of raising it arbitrary. When the Diet was assembled in 1687 the Palatine had asked it to appoint a commission which should at once draft and put into form a whole system of administrative reforms

<sup>1</sup> On the condition of Hungary under Turkish rule see the work of Salamon cited above.

<sup>2</sup> Buda, Visegrad, Eger, Fehérvár, Pécs &c. shared that fate. In the fifteenth century a German traveller had compared Buda to Augsburg; for what it looked like under the Turks we have the descriptions of Gerlach, Schwaig, Boetius, and Leslie, who visited it in 1573, 1576, 1605, and 1666 respectively. The once famous castle of Matthias Corvinus was crumbling, its art treasures and library had disappeared.

and corresponding constitutional changes. But the Estates held that this was a thing for themselves to do, and that for the moment they had done enough. Then a commission of Austrians was named for the purpose, with Kollonics at its head, and by the end of 1689 it had elaborated the reconstruction plan which bears the Cardinal's name.

It was the unfortunate fate of this work that all that was good in it remained on paper, while what was hostile in its spirit was put into life. The Cardinal's ideal was to make Hungary an orderly, docile, and well-governed province of an Austrian Empire, and to bring it back to the Catholic faith.<sup>1</sup> The two poles are no farther asunder than his aims were from those of the French revolutionists a century later. But with regard to the obstacles in his way, and his right to overcome them, his views resembled theirs. Like them he thought he could make a clean sweep of the past and build anew on foundations such as he considered right and useful. Had it depended on him alone there would have been small hesitation about the execution. But the Emperor's resolutions did not keep pace with those of his fiery adviser. The plan appealed to him, but if possible he wanted to get it carried out by smooth means.

<sup>1</sup> The Cardinal's ideas and convictions are clearly and tersely expressed in his own words when he told the assembled magnates in 1696 "that the Emperor could give no greater proof of his fatherly affection for Hungary than by wishing to govern it as he did his other hereditary provinces."



Of all the ills which Hungary had to suffer in those days none was more acutely felt than the excesses of the soldiery and the imperious bearing of their officers. This old-standing grievance had become harsher than ever owing to the emptiness of the Imperial Treasury and the feeling of conquest.<sup>1</sup> Kollonics fully recognized it, but at the same time he was convinced that real redress could only come from a reform of the financial system. His long experience as head of the Hungarian Board of Treasury enabled him to speak with authority. His reconstruction scheme included the proposition that Hungary ought to contribute 4 million florins a year to the Imperial Exchequer—about double the sum it had paid before—and that the taxes should be borne not only by the peasants and tenants, but also by the hitherto exempt classes, the landowning nobility and gentry.

To lay out new taxes and to alter the laws of the country required the consent of Parliament. But the Austrian statesmen had no mind to convoke it. The disposition of the nation was not promising, and the later reverses of the Turkish War had dimmed the feelings of gratitude and hope under the influence of which the changes of 1687 had been voted, so they resorted to an intermediate measure, and tried to make their proposi-

<sup>1</sup> See the cases of Generals Huyn, Corbelli, Auersperg, and several others in Thaly, *Bercsenyi*, vol. ii. All Austrian authors recognize that the Hungarian complaints were justified. Kollonics' own words bear ample testimony to it.

tions palatable to a chosen few. A convention of notable and representative Hungarians was called to Vienna (1696), where the reconstruction plan was officially communicated to them and they were asked to accept it. The distinction of having voiced their feelings belongs to Paul Széchenyi, Archbishop of Kalocsa. It was he who first found the courage<sup>1</sup> to appeal to the constitution, and to declare that what they were asked to do belonged to the diet and not to a private assembly.<sup>2</sup>

The attempt was renewed two years later, with the same negative result. The Hungarians declared that the principle of general taxation was fair, the common people overburdened, and that they had acknowledged it by voluntarily reducing the obligation of their tenants to gratuitous labour. But what was asked of them was too much. Again they referred to a diet and petitioned the King to convoke it. He dismissed them angrily, telling them that he had appealed to them to alleviate the misery of the common people, but that their only idea seemed to be to pay little or nothing at all.<sup>3</sup>

As the consent of the nation could not be obtained, the Imperial Government proceeded to do

<sup>1</sup> For an account of their feelings see Karolyi's *Autobiography*, p. 45: "We all fell into despair, fearing that inside of that strong stone-walled garden we would be ground to pieces."

<sup>2</sup> When the assembly separated Kollonics told Széchenyi not to be overconfident, as the Emperor would yet find means to bend the nation towards the accomplishment of his wishes, to which the Archbishop replied that he did not doubt it, but that there was a great difference between accomplishing a thing by free consent and by force.

<sup>3</sup> Maurer, pp. 361-362.

without it. The constitution was not again formally suspended, but actually it was put out of force; the Hungarian institutions and offices were not abolished but practically deprived of all authority. The new contribution was imposed on the country by royal order,<sup>1</sup> and other indirect taxes introduced, of which the raising of the price of salt was particularly irksome. When the Palatine or the Hungarian Chancellor raised their voices against the exactions of the soldiery their representations remained without effect. The most important measures were resolved without any participation of the nation. A beginning of Germanization was made by the introduction of the German language at all tax and other financial offices; a commission was established for disposing of the land in the newly recovered territories;<sup>2</sup> the Jazygians and Koumanians, who had always been freeholders, were mortgaged with their lands and labour for half-a-million florins to the Order of the Teutonic knights; the Servians, who had taken refuge in Hungary during the war to the number of about 80,000, finally settled in it despite the protestations of the counties and the frontier guard entrusted

<sup>1</sup> Originally it had been decided that the free towns were to pay  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the 4 millions, the landowners  $\frac{1}{2}$ , and the peasant tenants  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the rest, which would have made the respective shares 250,000, 1,250,000, and 2,500,000 fl. At the conference in Vienna the Hungarians had declared that the landowners could only pay  $\frac{3}{4}$  part, viz. 80,000 fl., and finally their share was fixed at 250,000 fl.

<sup>2</sup> The descendants of the original owners deprived by the Turks had always maintained their titles, and now claimed that the reconquered estates should be restituted to them. The Austrian Government assented in principle, but insisted that the titles should be proved and a war-tax paid for the recovery. The principle was just, but its execution through foreign commissions gave rise to continuous troubles and grievances.

to them; and finally new measures were taken against the Protestants, some of their schools closed, their preachers imprisoned, and all of them excluded from the recovered territory.

To the constitutional and material grievances was added the mortification of suffered neglect. None of the great Hungarian nobles was ever admitted to any real influence on the Empire's policy, although there were men of undoubted loyalty and ability amongst them—men who, like Palatine Esterhazy, had worked zealously and successfully for the establishment of hereditary, or, like Kohary, who had preferred Tököli's dungeon to the abandonment of his fidelity. Esterhazy was made a prince of the Roman Empire, but having received his reward he was shelved, and, like the rest of his countrymen, had to spend his activity in sterile endeavours either to bend the nation to its sovereign's will or to make the latter's Austrian advisers listen to its complaints. And as if to top it all and make it manifest that Hungary had indeed become a negligible quantity, the Peace of Carlowitz was concluded without her participation or representation, notwithstanding the article of law passed in 1687 stipulating for the contrary.

The nation could only vent its discontent in words. To proceed to deeds and try conclusions with the Emperor's armies would have seemed hopeless madness. Driven to despair, the common people did it in the north-east in 1697. They knew little

or nothing of the intentions and discussions in their favour, they were ground down by landlords, tax assessors, and most cruelly of all by the soldiers quartered on them; they learned that more taxes would be exacted, and they lent a willing ear to Tököli's emissaries, who once more appeared amongst them. A peasant revolt occurred, which was easily put down. There was no organized centre of resistance to lean upon anywhere. Transylvania was no more. As soon as the tide of war had turned against the Turks, Apaffy had endeavoured to link his cause to that of the Emperor. His negotiations led to the treaties of 1687 and 1688, by which Transylvania renounced all allegiance to Turkey and opened her frontiers to the Imperial armies. In return the Emperor confirmed Apaffy in his rights, and promised to maintain the liberties of the country, the form of government it had enjoyed hitherto, and the freedom of the four religions. With regard to the succession in the princely dignity he refused to take an engagement. When Apaffy died (April 1690) his son was a minor, and the Turks had resumed the offensive and named Tököli prince. Once more, and for the last time, fortune seemed to smile on the latter and the fate of Transylvania to hang in the balance. In the autumn the Imperial troops had returned, and Leopold then issued the diploma which bears his name, and which to the middle of the nineteenth century remained the fundamental law of the country. It was formally accepted

by the Estates and in all essentials confirmed the provisions of the former treaties. The question whether the princely dignity should be maintained and young Apaffy succeed his father was left open during the former's minority. When he came of age he was prevailed upon to resign his claims, and in compensation was made a prince of the Empire and granted a pension. Henceforth Transylvania was an autonomous province under the immediate sovereignty of the Hungarian King.

Again it was believed in Vienna that Hungary's spirit was finally broken. Had Austria been able to give her undivided force and attention to her sister's transformation, and had the balance of power between them remained as it then stood for a generation, it is possible that Kollonics' ideal might have been realized. That it came otherwise is mainly due to Francis Rakoczi II.

## CHAPTER I

Rakoczi's early life—The inherent difficulties of his position—Friendship with Bercsenyi and plans for a Hungarian uprising—Imprisonment, trial, escape, and exile in Poland.

FRANCIS RAKOCZI II. was but three months old when the death of his father left him the sole male representative of his historic house and heir to its vast possessions.<sup>1</sup> Great interests, hopes, and fears were centred round his cradle. In his last will his father had recommended him and his sister to the Emperor's protection, who later claimed their guardianship by virtue of this clause. But at first the children were entirely left in the hands of their mother. Under her tender care young Francis passed the first six years of his life, and they were the only ones in which it ran in normal grooves. He remained with her for six years more, but it was

<sup>1</sup> The acquisitive genius of the two first Rakoczis and their marriages with the heiresses of the Lórantffys and Bathorys had raised the fortune of their house from that of ordinary well-to-do country squires to or above the level of any ducal or princely house in Europe. The estates which Francis Rakoczi II. inherited spread over an area of about 2,400,000 acres. Innumerable castles and fortresses stood upon them. In the household of his father there were about 165 servants of all kinds, 237 castle- and 336 body-guards. Their yearly pay amounted to 42,670 florins in cash and 22,286 florins in board and clothes. Yet when he had to pay the fine of 400,000 florins he could only do it by borrowing money—100,000 florins from his mother, 20,000 from the Primate, 47,000 from the Jesuits.

in the environment of war, in which she took an active part.

The storms began to gather when Helena Zrinyi remarried. Her first union had been a family arrangement. She had been a good and faithful wife to Francis Rakoczi I., had borne him three children,<sup>1</sup> but had never loved him. In her second marriage she obeyed only the promptings of her heart. Her love for Tököli was absolute, deep, and submissive.<sup>2</sup> At once it drew not only herself but her children also into the current of his schemes and wars.

Their honeymoon was short. Immediately after his marriage Tököli took to arms again,<sup>3</sup> and for the next three years spent more of his time in the field than at the fireside. In these campaigns he dragged his young stepson with him, exposing the child to all their hardships and privations, heat and cold, hunger and thirst. In his autobiography Rakoczi accuses his stepfather of having had the settled purpose to make him perish, and through his inheritance further his ambitions to a Hungarian crown.<sup>4</sup> Tököli's intentions remain a matter of surmise; his acts prove his utter unscrupulousness, as well as his wife's yielding weakness in regard to him. Once only do we hear that she opposed

<sup>1</sup> George (born 1667) died a few months later; Juliana (born 1672), afterwards Countess of Aspremont; and Francis (born 1676).

<sup>2</sup> "Usque ad extremum halitum cum eo in tanta patientia, humilitate et matrimoniali vel potius . . . famulari obsequitate vixit," *Autobiography*, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 62.

<sup>4</sup> Vide *Autobiography*, pp. 8 and 9.



his will, and that was when he had conceived the idea of regaining the shattered confidence of the Turks by putting the heir of the Rakoczis into their hands as hostage for his own fidelity. Everywhere the Emperor's arms were in the ascendant; his only refuge seemed to lie in repairing to the Pashah of Nagyvarad; he was doubtful of the reception in store for him, and had explained to his wife that his plan was necessary for his own safety and harmless for the child. Already she had given her consent, but the last night brought better counsel. In the morning her tears prevailed, and Tököli started alone. Francis Rakoczi was then nine years old, and it was for the last time that he set eyes on his stepfather.

Two months after Tököli's departure General Caraffa appeared before Munkacs and summoned Helena to admit a German garrison into the fortress. As the place belonged not to her husband but to her son, who as yet had no quarrel with the Emperor, she might well have yielded without betraying her trust. She refused, however, and for two years resisted the siege. Whether she acted wisely may be open to discussion, but her defence of Munkacs has lifted her out of the rank of ordinary women, and, adorned with the triple crown of beauty, misfortune, and heroism, Helena Zrinyi lives in Hungarian history.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Munkacs fell by treason. The way it came about is also characteristic of Tököli. At the end of 1687 the fortunes of the Turks had sunk very low, and in his despair Toköli wrote to his wife that he had decided to place his

One of the consequences of the defence of Munkacs was the separation of Rakoczi from his mother. According to the terms of the capitulation Helena Zrinyi was brought to Vienna with her children. There the Emperor took over their guardianship, and appointed Cardinal Kollonics to exercise it. Juliana, who was then in her sixteenth year, was put into a convent of Ursulines, where her mother was allowed to join her. Francis was sent to a Jesuit college in Bohemia. Four days after their arrival in Vienna he had to take leave of his mother, whom he was never to see again.<sup>1</sup>

Great was the change, and bitterly the boy felt it at first. In Munkacs he had lived amongst the dangers and privations of a siege, but he had enjoyed its excitements, and had a very keen feeling that he was lord and master and the central figure of it all. Now he was in the hands of strangers, forcibly separated from all his former surroundings,<sup>2</sup> a schoolboy in a foreign country where with teachers

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last hope in the Pope, and asked her to send a minorite friar to Rome in order to obtain the intervention of the Holy See in his favour, and to promise in return his conversion to the Catholic faith. He added that he would henceforth be as staunch an enemy of Protestants as hitherto he had been their champion. Helena inadvertently gave the letter, together with her secret key, to Absalom, their confidential secretary, to decipher. He, a zealous Protestant, turned at once against his master, and together with Radacs, the commander of the beleaguered forces, prepared for the capitulation by squandering the provisions.

<sup>1</sup> For the history of Helena Zrinyi's life, and that of Francis Rakoczi's earlier years, see Horvath Mihaly's *Biography of Zrinyi Ilona*, Budapest, 1869, and Thaly Kalman, *Francis Rakoczi's Youth, 1676-1701*, Pozsony, 1881.

<sup>2</sup> Already in Vienna his faithful valet, Körössi, had been separated from him. Immediately after his arrival in Neuhaus his preceptor, Badinyi, who had accompanied him on the journey, was sent back by order of Kollonics, and he was left alone in his new surroundings.

and fellow-pupils he could only make himself understood in Latin. But the Jesuits have at all times understood the art of making their pupils like their schools. The first grief once passed, such seems to have been the case with Rakoczi too. In his *Autobiography* he speaks without any bitterness of his stay at Neuhaus, and expressly mentions that he was liked and well received by everybody and aggrieved by none.<sup>1</sup> After having finished his classical studies he was sent to the university of Prague. In the meantime his sister had married, and the trouble into which she got with Cardinal Kollonics through this step caused her brother to be called to Vienna and ended his studies.<sup>2</sup>

Rakoczi seems at this time to have been a youth of quiet and amiable manners, physically and mentally well developed, very good-looking, shy, but extremely proud, dignified, and lovable, possessing in a rare degree the gift of inspiring affection, eager to learn, chiefly interested in architecture, mathematics, and natural science, bored with philosophy and logic. The traits on which Saint Simon laid stress in the sketch he drew twenty years later of the exiled prince—nobility of purpose, dignity of appearance, tact and common

<sup>1</sup> "Amabar ubique ab omnibus per gratiam tuam et ubique recipiebar cum jactantia et quia contristavi neminem a nemine contristatus sum." —*Autob.* p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> In the archives of Vörösvár now in the possession of the Erdödy family, who inherited it from the Aspremonts, there is a report from a Jesuit from Neuhaus—often quoted in Thaly's above-cited work—which, together with Rakoczi's own *Autobiography*, is the chief source for the history of this period of his life.

sense, and the absence of any brilliant intellectual gifts—were noticeable already in the schoolboy of Neuhaus.

Suitors were not wanting for the hand of Juliana Rakoczi, who was very good-looking and one of the richest heiresses of Europe. She was still living with her mother in the Ursuline convent, and whoever wished to see them could only do so after having obtained the Emperor's or Cardinal Kollonios' consent. Rakoczi tells that it was the latter's intention that he should enter the Order of the Jesuits, and his sister take the veil, so that their House should become extinct and its possessions pass to the Church. The Cardinal's subsequent behaviour undoubtedly furnishes strong argument for the truth of this assertion. But whatever his views may have been, it is certain that the Emperor exercised no pressure in the matter, and let things take their course. The suitor who found favour in Juliana's eyes was Count Ferdinand Gobert Aspremont, Lieutenant-General in the Imperial Service, and as the Cardinal was then absent in Rome the marriage was celebrated without any difficulties by the Bishop of Vienna.<sup>1</sup> No valid objection could be brought forward against the bridegroom, who was of ancient and illustrious lineage, blameless character, and unimpeachable loyalty. But when the Cardinal returned he seems to have been in a towering rage. Aspremont was

<sup>1</sup> June 24, 1691.

imprisoned and put on trial for the surrender of Belgrade the year before, Juliana shut up in the convent of Tuln, and proceedings instituted to have the marriage annulled. But these endeavours proved vain; shortly the couple were released and reunited. Then Kollonics refused to surrender Juliana's share of the Rakoczi inheritance. It was in the course of the lawsuit begun for this purpose that the other side obtained an order from the Emperor that Rakoczi should be brought to Vienna and heard in his own affairs.

Helena Zrinyi was no more in Vienna when her son arrived. Fortune had smiled on Tököli's arms for the last time in the summer of 1690.<sup>1</sup> Her favour was short, but it brought about his reunion with his wife. Two Imperial generals had fallen into his hands, and the negotiations for their release led to the exchange of one of them for Helena Zrinyi. She would have wished to take her son with her, but this was naturally refused. In the spring of 1692 she had rejoined her husband,<sup>2</sup> and for eleven years more she lived at his side, exiled from her country, separated from her children, dependent for her support and his on the generosity

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> They met at Uj Palank in Southern Hungary, and Helena found her husband so aged and worn that she had difficulty in recognizing him. He was then but thirty-five, two years younger than her son-in-law Aspremont. In 1694 a child was born to them, but it lived only a few months. As long as the war lasted the Tökölis lived in Serbia, but after the peace they had, according to its terms, to be removed into the interior of Turkey. Nicomedia was assigned for their residence. Helena died there in 1703, and Tököli two years later.

of the Turks. It was a sad change from the splendour of her former surroundings, but she never faltered in her devotion nor regretted her decision.

Rakoczi was sixteen years old when he received the Emperor's order. Two years were yet wanting from the time when, according to Hungarian law, he could be declared of age. But no restrictions were imposed on him on this occasion, and he was left free to decide himself on the future course of his life. Kollonics desired that he should declare his full trust in him and, leaving the care of his interests in his—the Cardinal's—hands, return to Prague for the continuation of his studies. His sister represented to him that metaphysics and Austrian law would be of small use in his future life, that the time had come for him to take his proper place in the world, and that instead of fighting over their inheritance they might easily come to an amicable agreement. Her arguments and persuasions prevailed, but the fact that Rakoczi was allowed to do as he pleased proves that the Emperor had taken the decision out of Kollonics' hands into his own.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Writing after the lapse of twenty eventful years, Rakoczi's *Autobiography* is not free of errors of memory. So in the narration of the present episode he says (p. 28) that his sister obtained the Imperial order for his coming to Vienna by representing that he had attained his eighteenth year, and then again (p. 31) that the Emperor had sent him on his Italian journey, although he had passed out of guardianship by virtue of law. In reality he was only sixteen when these events happened, and by law and in fact a minor. He was formally declared to be of age by Imperial decree of March 9, 1694, and he tells himself that he received its notification in Rome in the spring of 1694 (p. 40). It is therefore clear that he was granted the right to decide for himself in 1692, not by right but by special favour of the Emperor, who was his supreme guardian.

It was in Vienna that the eyes of the young man first opened on the world and its ways. He enjoyed them, but if the outward course of his life at the time resembled that of other young men of his station, he soon learned that in reality his situation was different from theirs. A winter season in Vienna and the usual grand tour through Italy were followed by a visit to his estates in Hungary. It was there that he began to realize the difficulties and dangers of his position. The hearts of his countrymen were ready to go out to him, but they closed up when they saw his foreign dress and manners. Even though suppressed, the expectations which attached to his name made him an object of suspicion in the eyes of Austrian authorities. And what his inexperience might have failed to perceive his brother-in-law, who had accompanied him on the excursion, stood ready to explain. All his interests, as well as the natural fitness of things, made it advisable that he should live on his estates. To counterbalance the suspicions which would follow him thither, Aspremont advised an early marriage, as well to ensure the succession of his line as to offer a guarantee to the Imperial court for not lightly plunging into political adventures.

Aspremont's reasoning seemed sound and his counsel eminently disinterested. His own sister, Countess Althann, had a marriageable daughter at the time, between whom and Rakoczi—according to the latter's narrative—she wished to bring about

a match. But Aspremont thought the young prince should aim higher. Already, before his departure for Italy, the project of his union with a princess of the House of Hesse Darmstadt had been brought forward, and negotiations for his betrothal had so far advanced that he had thought it his duty to inform the Imperial court of his intentions. But while in Rome he had received the false news of this princess's death,<sup>1</sup> and now he gladly accepted the proposition of a marriage with another princess of the same House—Charlotte Amelie of Hesse Rheinfels. This time he kept his plans secret. On his return from Hungary he asked and obtained permission to visit the armies of the Emperor on the

<sup>1</sup> The story of Rakoczi's betrothal to Princess Madeline of Hesse and of the intrigue by which it was supposedly broken rests entirely on his tale (*Autobiography*, p. 43). I have endeavored to obtain some corroboration or elucidation of it by the study of all available contemporary sources, but in vain. Diligent search has been made in the Imperial archives in Vienna amongst all the papers relating to the relations with the Houses of Hesse Darmstadt and Hesse Rheinfels, amongst the file "Romania," and also in the circumstantial and often loquacious despatches of the Venetian envoys, but no trace of the engagement in question has been found. Rakoczi accuses the Empress Eleonora of having concocted the intrigue by which he was informed of the death of the Princess and she of his. But he gives no proof, and his accusation is in contradiction of what otherwise we know of the character of the Empress. The most extraordinary part, however, of his story is that he should have continued to think Princess Madeline dead until, after his wedding, he received letters in Frankfort (October 1694). Now Madeline and Rakoczi's wife were half-sisters—their mother, Countess Alexandra of Leiningen Westerburg, having been first married to George of Hesse Darmstadt (1667), and after his death (1676) to Charles of Hesse Rheinfels. By her first husband she had two daughters, one of them being Madeline (born 1671); by her second, six, the eldest being Charlotte (born 1679). Rakoczi arrived in Cologne in the middle of September 1694, and spent several days with his future parents-in-law before Princess Charlotte arrived from Thorn. It seems not only incredible but simply impossible that the matter of his former engagement to Princess Alexandra's daughter Madeline and her death should not once have been broached during this time. As Rakoczi's veracity cannot be doubted, it is clear that his memory must have been at fault when he wrote his memoirs.



Rhine and of King William in the Netherlands, and then repaired with Aspremont to Cologne, where he met the parents of his betrothed and where the wedding took place.<sup>1</sup> For having thus acted without the consent and even the knowledge of the Emperor he was on his return confined to his house in Vienna, but as the decree declaring him to be of age had been issued six months before, no further proceedings were taken.

The best-laid plans do not ensure success. Of the considerations which swayed Aspremont in his advising and Rakoczi in his acting, none was realized. His marriage did not lessen the distrust against Rakoczi in Vienna or prevent him from staking his fortune and his life on political enterprise. Nor did his connection with a German princely house prove of any help in the hour of his need. In fact, his union with Charlotte formed only a passing episode in his life. Six years and a half they lived together decorously and unitedly although—in the beginning at least—not happily, for she tormented him with fits of groundless jealousy.<sup>2</sup> When they had got accustomed to and fond of each other his destiny overtook him and separated them. He was then twenty-five and she twenty-two years old. When they met again after five eventful years their feelings had drifted apart, and neither of them

<sup>1</sup> September 25, 1694.

<sup>2</sup> *Autobiography*, pp. 44 and 457. Compare also, for their marital relations, pp. 62, 121, and 187; and Stepney's letters to Bruyninx of November 24, 1706, Bruyninx's letter to Rakoczi, February 7, 1707, and Stepney's to Addison, March 8, 1707, *Simonyi*, vol. iii. pp. 265, 311-312, and 315.

had any desire to make their union permanent. He was then in the zenith of his career, she a hostage in the hands of the Emperor; but the obstacle to their reunion did not come from the latter. She certainly had no such wish when a year later she fled from Prague and disregarded the orders of the Emperor to rejoin her husband.<sup>1</sup> Still less had he when, after the downfall of his cause, they met in his exile in Poland, and their remaining together depended on their own will alone.

Altogether woman and her influence played but a subordinate part in Rakoczi's life. His *Autobiography* is full of self-incrimination and repentance for having yielded to the sinful admiration of her charms; but all the love affairs of which he speaks—with the exception of one—amounted to nothing or very little, and neither the affection for his wife and children, nor the tender ties which linked him afterwards to the Polish princess Helena Sieniawska, exercised any influence on his political decisions and his line of action.

Nor were Aspremont's hopes for the perpetuation of his line destined to fulfilment. Three sons were born of his marriage with Princess Charlotte, of whom two survived him. But they died without male issue, and with them their House became extinct.

Shortly after their marriage the young couple

<sup>1</sup> See Stepney as above, *Simonyi*, vol. iii. p. 315; also the report of the Venetian envoy in *Dispacci di Germania*, vol. 190, of October 16, 1706, where it is told that guards were placed before Princess Rakoczi's house at Carlsbad, and that she was informed that she would have to rejoin her husband in Hungary without delay, or remain under arrest.

went to live on their Hungarian estates. The years they spent there were those in which what is commonly called the Kollonics regime was in full force. Nowhere was it resented more bitterly than in those north-eastern counties where Rakoczi's possessions lay, and which in Austria had always been regarded as the hotbed of rebellion. It was inevitable under these conditions that he should awake to the call of his blood; the question was whether, how, and when he would obey it.

Whether the four years of Jesuit education had actually obliterated the recollection of his childhood, or whether they had merely impressed him with the sense of the Emperor's power and the consequent necessity of dissembling, it is certain that for many years he exerted himself most anxiously to avoid or to allay the suspicions of the ruling powers in Austria. He had almost forgotten his native language; he dressed in Austrian fashion (which was the same as the Spanish), his household was composed of Germans and other foreigners, and he is even reported<sup>1</sup> to have said that if he knew which one of his ribs drew him towards Hungary he would tear it out. Many years later, when his career had been run, this conduct earned him the reproach of hypocrisy from Prince Eugen of Savoy.<sup>2</sup> It is more likely his distrust was sincere, and that the thought of Hungarian championship was not in his mind

<sup>1</sup> See contemporary *Chronicle of Cserey*, p. 314.

<sup>2</sup> See his letter to the Saxon Minister in Arneth's *Life of Prince Eugen*, vol. viii. p. 469.

then. But his endeavours were in vain; the Emperor treated him kindly, and gave him tokens of his good-will,<sup>1</sup> as at the time of his being declared of age, so at the birth of his sons, to whom Leopold I. and King Josef stood as godfathers. But to the Emperor's Government Rakoczi was and remained the born pretender, to be watched, held down, and, if the opportunity offered, suppressed. When he was in Hungary he saw himself surrounded by spies; when, after his marriage, he took steps to obtain the recognition of the princely rank and title which had descended to him from his great-grandfather, artificial difficulties were made and onerous conditions raised;<sup>2</sup> and when, at the outbreak of the revolt in 1697, he fled to Vienna because the leaders wanted to put him at their head, the fact that the rebels did not devastate his estates was exploited against him as proof of his secret connivance, and he was in danger of being arrested.<sup>3</sup> It was then

<sup>1</sup> *Autobiography*, p. 105, also pp. 62 and 64.

<sup>2</sup> The rank and title of a Prince of the Holy Roman Empire had been granted to George Rakoczi I. in the Treaty of Linz, 1645, by Ferdinand III. All his descendants had borne it, and they had been recognized as such by the court of Vienna, although Francis I. had never reigned in Transylvania. But when Francis II. was put to school at Neuhaus, the Jesuits there received orders from Kollonics to address him as Count. In Vienna he had been received at court with the etiquette due to a prince, but the formal recognition of his rank was avoided. In the decree declaring him to be of age he was called Francis Rakoczi, son of Prince Francis of Transylvania. When he applied for the recognition of his title the Board of War wanted him to raise a regiment for the Emperor at his cost. In 1697 the patent of recognition was at last granted, but only for himself and not for his issue, and a few years later Prince Eugen declared that all these tergiversations had been a blunder. The whole question is treated at length in Thaly, *Rakoczi's Youth*, pp. 270-300.

<sup>3</sup> *Autobiography*, p. 64; see also the instructions of the Board of War in *Feldzüge des Prinzen Eugen*, vol. ii. pp. 97-99.

that he conceived the idea of leaving Hungary altogether as the only escape from an intolerable situation. Through Count Kinsky,<sup>1</sup> as well as through Cardinal Kollonics, he asked for an exchange of his estates in Hungary for some of similar value in Austria or Germany. He received a cutting answer from the first, a kind one from the second,<sup>2</sup> but his offer came to naught, and he returned to live in Hungary. It was in the years which next ensued that the influence of the man whose fate and action were henceforth indissolubly linked to his first entered his life, and that their acquaintance ripened to intimate friendship. This man was Count Nicholas Bercsenyi.

In grasp of mind, power and will, and talent for organization Bercsenyi<sup>3</sup> towers far above all his contemporary countrymen, and it is one of the saddest aspects of the system in force in those days that it drove a man like him into relentless opposi-

<sup>1</sup> Count Franz Ulrich Kinsky was High Chancellor of Bohemia (*Oberst Kämaler*), and after Strattman's death one of the most influential of Emperor Leopold's Ministers. He died 1699.

<sup>2</sup> *Autobiography*, p. 61. Kinsky told him that instead of making such propositions he would do better to throw himself on the Emperor's mercy, as there was ample evidence to prove his guilt and his estates could be confiscated anyhow. It is a curious coincidence that a similar proposition had been made by Rakoczi's grandfather, Peter Zrínyi. See footnote, p. 48.

<sup>3</sup> In Hungarian folklore, as well as in history, the name of Bercsenyi is indissolubly linked with that of Rakoczi. In the eyes of his contemporaries—Hungarian, Austrian, and foreign—he was for a long time the real author and intellectual head of the great Hungarian national uprising. In the period of long national lethargy which followed, his figure had fallen into comparative oblivion. It was restored to its significance and true proportion by the modern Hungarian historian, Coloman Thaly—in numerous essays, and chiefly in his great work, *A Bercsenyi Család*, 3 vols. The great work on Prince Eugen of Savoy's campaigns, edited by the Imperial and Royal War Department, also bears testimony to the commanding part he played.

tion instead of making use of him in the Emperor's councils. He came of an old and distinguished family, the traditions of which, as well as his own early associations, would have assigned his place rather in the dynastic than in the kurucz camp. His grandfather had been made a baron, and had fallen fighting the Emperor's battles against the Swedes; his father had served the Emperor against the Turks, and had been made a count. He himself had at an early age taken part in his father's campaigns, distinguished himself on the battlefield, lived for a time in the Palatine Esterhazy's court, and at the age of twenty-one obtained the command of the frontier post of Szeged. Then he married the heiress of the Drugeths of Homonna, succeeded that family in the lord-lieutenancy of the county of Ung, and by birth, wealth, and talent seemed destined to rise to the highest offices in his country's Government. But to keep on terms with the powers that were required a more pliant back than he possessed. The offices which he held necessarily brought him into contact with the Austrian military commanders, and for a Hungarian with his love of country and pride of race such contact meant conflict. Less than anybody else could he—himself sarcastic, proud, and overbearing—brook the exactions to which he saw his people exposed and the slights he had himself to suffer. His experiences in this line began in Szeged, continued in Ung, and reached their climax when, after

the convention in Vienna (1696)<sup>1</sup> he accepted the newly created office of supreme commissary for the north-eastern counties for the settlement of all controversies between the civil and military authorities.<sup>2</sup> At the conferences in Vienna, in both of which he took part, he could learn the aims of the ruling statesmen, and in the years which followed see them put into effect. Passionately resenting his country's wrongs, firmly convinced that the only remedy for them lay in the sword, clearly understanding that it could not be drawn without foreign help, he became the very embodiment of Hungary's *Germani nominis aversio* in the seventeenth century,<sup>3</sup> and as such stands forth in her history.

The close vicinity of their estates gave Rakoczi and Bercsenyi ample opportunity to develop their friendship, and to discover that their views, feelings, and aspirations with regard to their country were the same. Bercsenyi was by ten years the senior of the two, and had a rich experience of practical life behind him. It was through him that Rakoczi became convinced that the country was ready to rise if a leader and opportunity offered; it was through him too that a small nucleus of trusted friends learned that the man who was born for the

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 74.

<sup>2</sup> For the details of these experiences compare Thaly's *History of the Bercsenyi Family*, vol. ii. pp. 21-26, 74-75, 79-81, 133, 169-172; also, on the personal slights he had to suffer from General Corbelli, the essay in *Tanulmányok a Rakoczi Korból*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>3</sup> "Germanici nominis odor implacabilis," Wagner calls him, ii. 737.

part stood ready to perform it. As for the opportunity, it was preparing fully two thousand miles away. In Madrid, Charles II., the last king of the Spanish line of the Habsburgs, lay hopelessly ill, and the conviction was general that his death would light the flames of a European war. It was under these circumstances that the two friends decided to step from brooding and discussing into the field of action, and that Rakoczi wrote the letter to Lewis XIV. which he confided to a Belgian officer in the Imperial army who had been received and entertained in his house as a trusted guest.

The story of Longueval's betrayal, Rakoczi's arrest, Bercsenyi's escape, the former's imprisonment, trial, and subsequent dramatic flight, is told in every book on Hungarian history. Less widely known is the fact that neither the text of his letter to the French king<sup>1</sup> nor any record of the trial has as yet been discovered,<sup>2</sup> and that all our knowledge

<sup>1</sup> Whether Wagner, Leopold I.'s historian, had seen the original of Rakoczi's letter is uncertain. Both Szalay (*History of Hungary*, vol. vi. p. 52) and Thaly (*Bercsenyi*, vol. ii. p. 298) think so, but the former's surmise that it might be found in the archives of the Foreign Office in Paris and be identical with the paper mentioned in Fiedler's *Österr. Geschichtsquellen*, vol. xvii. p. 551, has not been confirmed. Albert Lefèvre, in his *Les Magyars sous la domination ottomane*, states that he could not find the letter in the archives in Paris, and his quotation is merely a reproduction of the considerations contained in the sentence against Rakoczi.

<sup>2</sup> Hitherto all researches for the record of the trial have proved fruitless. Szalay (vol. vi. p. 56) supposes them to be buried in some unknown archive. Thaly (*ibid.* p. 293) tells of Arneth's—director of the Imperial and Royal Archives, and himself a distinguished historian—researches and their negative result. At the request of the present author new researches have been made in the Haus- Hof- und Staats-Archiv as well as in the War Department in Vienna, but in neither has any trace of the missing records or anything relating to the trial been found. As in the days of Leopold I. most affairs were treated in special commissions, and the presidents of these were in the habit of taking the state papers with them and depositing them in their



about the case rests on his own tale and the sentence of death pronounced against him in default eighteen months after his arrival in Poland.

In Wiener Neustadt Rakoczi was imprisoned in the same cell which his grandfather—Peter Zrinyi—had occupied during his trial. Thanks to his wife's resourceful energy, a German officer's good-will and adventurous spirit, and mainly to extraordinarily good luck, the question whether his fate was to be the same was taken out of the hands of his judges. His case was indeed a grave one. His main plea that the court before which he was brought had no jurisdiction over him was undoubtedly well founded in Hungarian law, but had small chance of being listened to. The only witness against him was the man who had so foully betrayed his hospitality, and who now added to the villainy of his denunciation by inventing stories about a formed conspiracy and

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family archives, Chancellor Buccellini, who had charge of Rakoczi's trial, may have done the same. In that case there is a possibility of the papers being in the castle of Cronberg, the archives of which have not been explored.

The correspondence of Buccellini with his friend Count Ernest Frederic Windischgrätz, who at the time of Rakoczi's trial represented the Imperial court at the diet of Regensburg, is in the castle of Tachau, belonging to the elder line of the princely House of Windischgrätz. Through the kindness of the present owner the author has obtained copies of the full correspondence. But although there are forty-nine letters written in 1701, only five of them contain brief notices with regard to Rakoczi's trial. On April 23 and 27 Buccellini informs his friend of Rakoczi's arrest; on May 5 that Rakoczi was on the way of being brought to Vienna, that there were abundant and sufficient reasons for the arrest, and that time would disclose all; on June 8 that he had spent several hours in Vienna studying the case; and on June 22 that he had just returned from Wiener Neustadt, where he had spent three days examining the prisoners. It speaks greatly in favour of Buccellini's discretion and judicial attitude that even in his intimate correspondence he should have refrained from giving any opinion on the case which he was about to try. It was only after Rakoczi's fight that he called him a villain (letters of November 9 and 16).

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secret meetings. That conspiracy had so far only existed in the realm of wishes, and these meetings had never taken place.<sup>1</sup> But if Longueval's tales were inventions, Rakoczi's letter to the French king was a fact. In his *History*<sup>2</sup> he glides around the main fact, in his *Autobiography* he not only frankly avows it but also his motives. Between his tale and the considerations in the sentence there is no essential difference.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The best proof of this is that after Rakoczi's flight all proceedings were dropped against the men who had been arrested with him, the three Vays, Szarmay, Okolicsanyi, Sandoz, and others. Longueval's tale about a secret meeting between them at a given place and date broke down on his confrontation and the prisoner's offer to prove an alibi.

<sup>2</sup> The *Histoire des Révolutions en Hongrie* was written by Rakoczi, partly in Latin and part y in French, for publication after his death, and appeared at The Hague 1739. It is an appeal to the world for the Hungarian cause. See "Lettres de Turque et de Czar de Severska, 1730-1739," lately discovered at Geneva, and edited by Thaly 1909. The *Autobiography* was written by himself, deposited in the Camaldulense monastery at Gronibon, and is in the nature of a confession. It was only discovered in 1838 and published in 1846. The way in which he tells the events immediately preceding his arrest in the two books forms an interesting illustration of their difference. In the *History* he says that when he received his sister's letter informing him that Longueval had been arrested and letters of Hungarian magnates found on him, he could easily have fled to Poland, but that the consciousness of his innocence retained him. In the *Autobiography* he tells that he received his sister's letter while playing cards after supper with German officers; that he thought at once of fleeing but that the want of ready money prevented him from doing it on the spot, and during the ensuing night he was arrested.

<sup>3</sup> The sentence says that Rakoczi had written to the King of France praising the favours which his family had formerly received from the French crown, expressing his own and his country's confidence in the said King as in a father and protector, and adding that the present circumstances were very favourable, the principal families discontented, and, therefore, there was greater probability of attaining their aims if they could count on French help, and that as the Estates were ready to advance the King's cause, so he, Rakoczi, by the inclination inherited by his ancestors, would personally co-operate for the advantage of France.

In the *Autobiography*, pp. 70-73 and 102-105, Rakoczi tells how he and Bercsenyi had become convinced that a remedy for the evils in Hungary could not be obtained by peaceful means, but only by shaking off the yoke. Then he discusses the state of things which made an uprising impossible, and proceeds to tell how during his visit to Vienna he had learned the state of the negotiations of the Spanish Succession and the inevitability of war, returned with these glad tidings to Hungary, and how in accord with his friends he had resolved to appeal to the French King.

That Rakoczi had the intention to provoke a revolution in Hungary there can be no doubt. Beyond the appeal to Lewis XIV. he seems to have done nothing as yet.<sup>1</sup> But he staked his life when he wrote his letter, and he lost the game when he entrusted it to Longueval. If he escaped from paying the penalty he owed it to another officer in the Imperial army, a Captain Lehmann, in whose custody he happened to be placed. Longueval was made a baron and given an estate in Croatia, Lehmann was beheaded and quartered.

Fortune smiled on Rakoczi during his escape. The distance from Wiener Neustadt to Podolin, where he crossed the Polish frontier, is about 380 miles. Accompanied by his faithful page, Berzeviczy, he travelled in the uniform of a soldier of the Castelli regiment, to which his liberator Lehmann belonged. His way led him first through villages where real officers and soldiers of that regiment were quartered, and then through a country where he had often passed before and everybody knew him. He had to contend against the regulations which forbade postmasters to furnish horses to travellers who had no passports, and against the still stricter rules on the frontier. Still he arrived at Podolin on Friday, November 11, about noon,

<sup>1</sup> Preparations to form a conspiracy had certainly been made. On December 1, 1701, du Hérou wrote to Lewis XIV. : "Your Majesty would certainly form a good opinion of Rakoczi's ability if you knew all he has done for the constitution of a strong party without exciting suspicion." Du Hérou wrote on the strength of what Rakoczi and Bercsenyi told him, and they had then an evident interest to extol their efforts.

after having left his prison on the evening of the Monday before. Three days later he was in Cracow, where he changed his dress and hired a coach and four for his journey to Warsaw. There he and Bercsenyi fell into each other's arms. On or about the same day a price of 6000 florins had been set on his head, and of 10,000 on his being delivered alive into the hands of the Imperial authorities.<sup>1</sup>

Still more fortunate than his friend, Bercsenyi had escaped from imprisonment altogether. He was on the way to Vienna with his wife when he met Szirmay's secretary, who told him of his master's and Rakoczi's arrest and his own danger. Forthwith he returned to his castle of Brunocz, took what valuables and necessities he could lay hands on, and then fled to Poland. There he sought not only a refuge, but also the way for starting the revolution in Hungary. During six months he had worked with zeal and ability for this purpose, applying for aid to the Kings of France and Poland, explaining to them—in carefully prepared State papers—the state of his country, where everything was ripe for an outbreak, and the advantages they would derive from it, and holding out to Augustus the flattering prospect of a grateful nation bestowing its crown on a liberator, and thus bringing the glorious period of the Anjou kings into life again. But as yet he had come no nearer to his aim.

<sup>1</sup> The Imperial edict was issued November 24, 1701.

Meanwhile his enemies, too, had been on the alert, and a few days before Rakoczi's arrival he had had the narrowest escape from a trap they had set for his capture.

Poland in those days was a hotbed of political intrigues—domestic and foreign. For a century and a half the courts of Vienna and Paris had been striving for supremacy of influence in Warsaw, and at each recurrent Royal election endeavouring to place their candidate on the throne. Never had their rivalry been keener than after the death of John Sobieski.<sup>1</sup> The contest between the two factions—Austrian and French—had lasted a year, and resulted in the election of Augustus of Saxony,<sup>2</sup> who at the outbreak of the Spanish War found himself courted by both sides.<sup>3</sup> He was then in the throes of his war with Charles XII., and his alliance with Peter the Great, both of which were to cost him and his country so dear. The King of Sweden had already won the battle of Narva, but

<sup>1</sup> 1696.

<sup>2</sup> For the state of Poland in those days, the struggle for Sobieski's succession, Augustus's election, and Austrian and French policy with regard to him, compare a manuscript of Abbé F. D. S., who had travelled there in 1688, in the Bibliothèque Mazarin, Paris; Hauteville, *Relation historique de la Pologne*, 1687; an essay of Carl Heibig, "Polnische Wirtschaft und französische Diplomatie, 1692-1697," in Sybel's *Historische Zeitschrift*, 1859; and Alfred Rambeaux, *Recueil des instructions données aux ambassadeurs et ministres de France*, Paris, 1890, vol. Pologne.

<sup>3</sup> After the failure of Prince Conti's candidature, and the election of Augustus, coolness had arisen between France and Poland. Lewis had recalled the Abbé de Polignac, and during three years there had been no French Ambassador or Minister at Warsaw. But at the approach of the Spanish crisis he sent the Marquis du Héron on a special mission to Augustus (May 1700) for the purpose of first mediating peace with Sweden, and then bringing Augustus into line with the Emperor's other enemies.

neither his power nor his temper was as yet fully realized in Paris and Vienna, and both Powers were bidding for Augustus's alliance.

The outlook, therefore, was promising for Bercsenyi, and at first it seemed as if his efforts might meet with success. In the French Minister, the Marquis du Héron, he found a warm advocate who was soon to become a personal friend. Augustus received him in secret audience, listened complacently to the exposition of his ideas, and bestowed an estate in Lithuania upon him, which, in the fallen state of his fortunes, was most welcome. But there the upward current stopped. Lewis XIV., either because he did not believe in the chances of a Hungarian uprising in general, and Bercsenyi's capability of leading it in particular, or because he wished first clearly to settle his relations with Augustus, refused to entertain the representations of his envoy. He remarked that it was the King of Poland who had the most to gain by the disposition of the Hungarians, therefore it was in him to aid them, and he ordered du Héron to abstain from all further participation in the matter.<sup>1</sup> Augustus meanwhile had seen Charles XII.'s further advance in Livonia, and disbelieving that France could or would arrest him, had decided for the Imperial alliance. He still refused Count

<sup>1</sup> Du Héron's despatches are in the archives of the Foreign Office in Paris, *Hongrie*, vol. ix. They are highly interesting, particularly those of August 4, 11, and November 16, with which he forwarded Bercsenyi's *Promemorias* to his sovereign. Lewis XIV. repeated his refusal of July 28 on August 4 and September 1, 1701.

Strattmann's<sup>1</sup> demand for Bercsenyi's extradition, but it was with his Prime Minister's co-operation that the plot for his forcible abduction was devised and carried out. It was Beuchling who proposed to Bercsenyi secretly to meet at a distant place a non-existent emissary of Tököli; it was in his carriage that Bercsenyi started on the journey; and it was in the disguise of a confidential commissioner of the Polish court that the Imperial captain who directed the whole enterprise was placed therein with him. That Bercsenyi—who was accompanied by only two Hungarians and one Pole, upon whom he could rely—escaped from the attack of fifteen Imperial dragoons<sup>2</sup> was due partly to his presence of mind and courage, and partly to the good luck which amidst all their misadventures favoured him and Rakoczi at the time.<sup>3</sup>

On his journey Rakoczi met the troop of riders returning from Petrykow, and in Warsaw he learned what their errand had been. Safety there was none for him and Bercsenyi in Poland, but it was the only place from which they could hope to accomplish the purpose which was uppermost

<sup>1</sup> The Imperial Minister, son of the former Chancellor.

<sup>2</sup> See de Héron's Report, November 20, 1701.

<sup>3</sup> The attempt of Petrykow and its details were hitherto only known by Rakoczi's narration in the *Histoire* and the *Autobiography*. The present author has found in the Imperial archives in Vienna the original Report of Captain Leonhard Schiller, who had directed the whole undertaking, travelled in the carriage with Bercsenyi, and whose identity had remained unknown to his intended victim, his friends, and consequently to subsequent historians. In the main his tale tallies with what Bercsenyi told and Rakoczi wrote from memory.

in their minds. In January 1702 Augustus had openly declared for the Emperor, and by a secret clause to his treaty of alliance had bound himself to do all that was in his power for the extradition of the Hungarian rebels.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately for them this power was very small,<sup>2</sup> for the great Polish nobles of the French party took delight in showing them not only hospitality and personal friendship but in aiding them to carry out their plans. Foremost amongst them were the Palatine of Belz, Adam Sieniawski, and his spirited and courageous wife, Princess Helena Elizabeth Lubomirska. She belonged to the type of ladies of whom the Duchess de Longueval of the French "Fronde" is the most prominent representative, had always taken an active part in her country's politics, worked with energy for Prince Conti's election, and had shown her sympathy for the Hungarian cause by offering to Bercsenyi the hospitality of all her castles. She was away when Rakoczi arrived, but immediately after her return du Héron brought them together. In the friendship which was then formed her husband took a generous share; it was never broken, and was of signal value to Rakoczi. It was on the Sieniawski

<sup>1</sup> Du Héron's Reports in the Paris and those of Strattmann in the Vienna archives. On February 4, 1702, the latter wrote to the Emperor: "There is a new attempt preparing against Bercsenyi, and I hope it will be more fortunate than the last one."

<sup>2</sup> In Vienna they were perfectly aware of it. On the back of the secret clause, as conserved in the archives in Vienna, "Saxonia 1702, fasc. 14 a," there is an annotation saying that little weight is to be put on the secret article, because although the King might promise much he will not be able to fulfil it.



estates of Moscsenicza and Brzezan that he and Bercsenyi spent the next eighteen months hiding in the disguise of civil engineers.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For the relations of Rakoczi to Siemawski and his wife, see *Autobiography*, pp. 138 and 139. His letters to them are in the archives of the Princess Czartoryski. I have had no opportunity of seeing them, and do not know whether they have ever been examined.

## CHAPTER II

The return and beginning of the Hungarian revolution—Early adhesions, Ocskay, Karolyi—Rapid growth—Events from June to December 1703.

FROM the outset Rakoczi had based his plans on the assistance of France, and it was to her that he continued to look for support to the end of his career. His hopes were doomed to prove illusive, but it must be owned that the responsibility for cherishing them belongs to him more than to the French king. Now as ever Lewis XIV. stood ready to profit by a diversion in the Emperor's rear, and "to drive the Hungarians forward on a path which they had voluntarily entered,"<sup>1</sup> but now as before he wished to leave the entering to their own volition, and now as afterwards he declined all binding engagements as to the outcome. Proofs of personal good-will he gave to the two exiles, granting an allowance of 12,000 francs a year to Rakoczi, and of 8000 to Bercsenyi, but he took care to state that he had not caused their misfortunes.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> *Réponse du Roi*, January 26, 1702, on the margin of du Héron Reports of December 22, 1701.

But regarding their other requests—the money, arms, and officers they asked for, the troops they were to levy, and the assurance that they would be included in the future treaty of peace—he continued to hesitate and to delay.

In reality the king had but a slight opinion at the time of the possibilities and chances of a Hungarian uprising. He was well aware of the spell of Rakoczi's name, but the Emperor's arms had been so triumphant in the late war, the country since had seemed so crushed and subdued, that all propositions for a new enterprise in this direction appeared but shadowy. A far more promising opportunity for causing trouble to the Emperor seemed to offer in Poland. Du Héron, who had never had full faith in the success of his mission to Augustus, had several times suggested to Versailles to conspire with the Conti faction for his dethronement. Lewis had hitherto disapproved these proposals, but after Augustus had sided with the Emperor he authorized his Minister to proceed with a plan to which the Swedish advance gave further likelihood of success. Reviewing the list of available candidates for the throne to become vacant—Conti, the Palatines of Cracow and Belz, Radziwill, and one of Sobieski's sons—Lewis added that Rakoczi would be far the best and most desirable of them all.<sup>1</sup> Héron, however, was neither discreet nor fortunate in his efforts, and Augustus resolved

<sup>1</sup> *Recueil des Instructions*, vol. Pologne.

to get rid of him. Returning from a supper on the night of November 11, 1702, the French Minister was arrested by a detachment of dragoons, taken to Thorn, and afterwards sent back to France. His removal was a severe loss to the two Hungarian exiles. After the affront Lewis sent no other representative to Augustus,<sup>1</sup> and Rakoczi had to carry on his negotiations through the Marquis de Bonnac, who, as Lewis's Minister to Charles XII., resided then in Danzig, and was as sceptical with regard to the Hungarian plans as his masters in Versailles.

Meanwhile all news from home confirmed the growth and spread of the bitter discontent engendered by the Kollonics regime. The half-hearted concessions of 1699 and 1700 had but shifted the burden of the hateful new contributions from the gentry to the already overtaxed and down-trodden peasantry. New grievances had been added to the old ones by the levying of fresh troops to be sent to Italy, and the imposition of a new tax on salt. The peasants had the most to suffer and the least to lose, therefore they were the first to rise. Many of them left their villages and farms and took to the woods and mountains, where they formed bands of robbers. Amongst these were some of Rakoczi's own tenants, who

<sup>1</sup> Augustus wrote to Lewis XIV. to justify his proceedings, but the event of the Swedish War made his assurances of small importance. Diplomatic relations between him and France were only re-established after Charles XII.'s downfall at Pultawa, 1711, when Lewis sent Hooke, afterwards Benzenval, to Warsaw.

early in 1703 sent one of their number—a man called Bige—together with a Ruthenian priest, to Poland to find out whether their lord and prince was still alive. They found him at Brezan, and representing their misery to him, informed him that the one Imperial regiment, Montecucoli, which had been left behind had just received marching orders for Italy, and implored him to come back and put himself at their head.

It seemed a poor invitation for the two great lords, but necessity makes strange bed-fellows. So Count Bercsenyi's equerry was sent to Hungary to ascertain the state of things in Rakoczi's domains and in the counties beyond the Tibiscus. On his return he confirmed all that Bige had said, and assured the Prince that he had only to send his orders and standards to set thousands in motion. Rakoczi sent them with promises of further succour, but enjoined the people not to begin the movement until they had heard further from him, and not to commit any depredations against their landlords, but to try somehow to obtain possession of some fortified place badly guarded by its garrison. At the same time he went with Bercsenyi to Potocki, the Palatine of Kiow, and Prince Wisniowecki, and obtained their assistance for the levying of some troops, giving them a mortgage on his estates in Hungary.<sup>1</sup> Then he sent Bercsenyi to Danzig to

<sup>1</sup> Only a short time before, Prince Adam Liechtenstein had received from the Imperial Treasury a mortgage on these same confiscated estates for a loan of 200,000 florins he had given.

confer with Bonnac, and pending his return, retired to Mme Sieniawska at Holesicz, near the Hungarian frontier.

As was to be foreseen, Rakoczi's orders were badly obeyed. The peasants, now turned loose, who bore their landlords as many grudges as they did against the foreign soldiers and tax-collectors, when they received his standards, did not wait for further orders, but began their struggle for freedom by marching on the estates of the landowners, burning and robbing there, as well as in churches and on farms. It was a regular peasants' uprising, with all its excesses and depredations. There were no regular troops in the country, but Marquis Nigrelli, who was Commander-in-Chief in Kassa, called the militia of the counties to arms, and they obeyed the summons.

Rakoczi was in Drosdowicze on a visit to his friend Konski when these things occurred. There he received a deputation from the insurgents, with one Majos at their head, urging him once more to come home and take the lead. They represented to him that the people had risen on the sight of his banners, that they were devoted to his name, and their number increased every day. But without a leader their undertaking would come to nothing, and if he failed them in this moment he would for ever stand reproached for having abandoned them.

Nothing was prepared. Instead of money

Rakoczi had so far only received promises from Bonnac. The Polish levies were not ready. Bercsenyi was absent. Crossing the frontier might mean capture, and falling into the hands of the Austrians meant certain death on the scaffold. But the fire now alighted, once extinguished, might never be rekindled. So a decision had to be taken at once. Rakoczi was twenty-seven years old, full of courage and belief in his cause. He decided for action, and accompanied only by a few soldiers of Palatine Konski's guards, started for Hungary. Arriving on the frontier, he learned that Baron Karolyi had utterly routed the insurgents at Dolha. Everything seemed to be over, still he decided to go on. He despatched a courier to Wisniowecki and Potocki to hasten the arrival of the promised troops, and sending word to the dispersed insurgents to join him, set foot again on his native soil on June 16, near the mountain of Beskad, which divides the two countries. There he was joined by a rabble of about 200 marauders on foot and 50 on horseback, armed with sticks and scythes, half-naked, under the leadership of the former soldiers in the Imperial army—Horvath and Moricz—a peasant called Esze, and Kiss, a bandit of the high-roads.

Such was the poor beginning of the great Hungarian uprising which lasted from 1703 to 1711. A few regiments of trained troops, with a resolute commander at their head, could have nipped it in

the bud. But Austria was engaged to the utmost limit of her strength in the great war in the West. Of Imperial troops there were but three and a half regiments of infantry and three of cavalry in all Hungary.<sup>1</sup> They were dispersed over the whole country, and in the immediate neighbourhood of the region of the Tibiscus, where the movement began, and which was the next exposed to Rakoczi's inroad, there was but the one regiment of Montecucoli cuirassiers.

The garrisons in the fortified places, of which there were between twenty and thirty in the kingdom, amounted to about 9500 men, numbering from 300 to 1400 in each place. They were, however, not available for the open campaign. There was, of course, the local militia, consisting of the levies the counties were obliged to furnish, but, as events proved, they were not to be depended upon. It was one thing to keep a rabble of revolted peasants in order when they were led by men like Esze, Pap, and Kiss; it was altogether different when their leader was a great prince bearing the proudest of Magyar names.

The crowd around Rakoczi grew quickly in number, and within a few days after his arrival there were about 3000 men on foot and 300 on horseback in his camp. As yet they were of the same calibre as those whom Karolyi had routed

<sup>1</sup> They were not complete, numbering only about 6000 men altogether, *Feldzüge des Prinzen Eugen*, vol. 7. p. 110.



at Dolha, but as there was no enemy in sight, and as they could not subsist in the mountains, he moved on. Descending into the plains of Munkacs he encamped in the town opposite his ancestral castle which his mother had defended against Caraffa nineteen years ago. Its garrison consisted of about 300 men, many of whom had married native girls and sympathized with the people around them. Others had grown old. From all the information he had received Rakoczi could reasonably hope that the fort would surrender without a fight, but he was surprised by the arrival of two squadrons of Montecucoli cuirassiers whom Nigrelli had sent back on hearing of the new troubles. After a short tussle the regulars easily routed the untrained rabble and sent them back into the mountains from which they had come. But they did not follow, and a few days later even let a new force of about 200 horsemen pass undisturbed before them on their way to Zawadka, where Rakoczi was rallying his levies. There the Prince was also joined by Bercsenyi, who had come with four squadrons of Polish dragoons, two companies of Roumanians, some money from Bonnac, and promises of more.

The leader of the small band which arrived so opportunely at Zawadka was Ladislaus Ocskay of sinister fame. He was about sixteen when he had an ear cut off by the common hangman; he was barely twenty-eight when he died a

traitor's death on the executioner's block. Between that beginning and ending lay a life of reckless adventure, infamy, and crime, but also of daredevil deeds and famous exploits. He came of good old stock, and was in the Jesuits' college at Tyrnau when he heard that the Emperor's officers were enlisting recruits for Count Palfy's hussar regiment. He threw his books to the wind, joined the colours as a private, and was sent to the lower Danube, where his regiment was fighting against the Turks. There he committed his first misdeed—what it was has not come down to posterity—for which he lost his ear. Shortly afterwards he killed a fellow-soldier of the name of Tisza, whose sister by a strange coincidence he was to marry in after years, and to escape punishment deserted to the Turks, whose faith he adopted, submitting even to being circumcised. After the peace of Karlovicz he obtained his pardon and re-entered his old regiment, with which, after the outbreak of the great war, he went to the Rhine. There he distinguished himself by his bravery, but, being a drunkard and a rowdy, never rose beyond the rank of sergeant. Dissatisfied, he deserted to the French, where he was well received and made lieutenant in the king's Hungarian squadron, but, finding the French discipline still more irksome than the Austrian, deserted again to the Imperials. He did not remain long, but, obtaining a passport under false pretences, persuaded seven fellow-

soldiers to flee with him and to return home. On their long journey through Southern Germany and Austria they were joined by other marauders and deserters who, arriving in Hungary, disbanded, and preyed on villages and country houses. Ocskay, pushing his audacity so far as to show himself in his old college town, was met by the lieutenant-colonel of his own regiment, Baron Pongracz, arrested, and put into irons. But luck was still with him. Somehow or other he obtained not only his release, but even an Imperial patent to collect the deserters who had come with him and bring them back to their colours. When on this errand he heard of Rakoczi's arrival, and turned his horses' heads to the East to offer his allegiance to the prince. The men he brought with him were, like himself, free-booters and adventurers; some of them had seen service under Tököli, like most of those who came under Borbely from the region beyond the Tibiscus, which they had made too hot to hold them. But there was fighting-stuff in them, and many of them rose afterwards to high rank in the Confederate army, none so high as Ocskay, neither did any other come to such ignominious end.

Bands were also forming in the country beyond the Tibiscus under Andrew Bone and Borbely, and their men told Rakoczi that the peasantry there were longingly waiting for his arrival. Count Stephan Csaky, Bercsenyi's brother-in-law, with the levies of the counties of Bereg and Ugocsa

and 200 German troops, was guarding the passages of the river; but Ocskay routed the small detachment which Csaky had sent to Tiszabecs, and Rakoczi with his army passed the river at Ugrony. Thousands flocked now into his camp, where he soon had about 8000 men around him. Rumour magnified their numbers, and even reported of a corps of those formidable Swedes who had been doing such wonders in the north. Count Csaky's levies dispersed and like himself retired into fortified places to watch the tide of events.

Already when still an exile in Poland Rakoczi had issued letters and patents in which he spoke like a sovereign prince, giving orders and threatening with the consequences of disobedience. Now he issued a new manifesto to the county of Szabolcs, explaining the reasons for his having taken to arms, enjoining clergy and laity, nobles, gentry, and every person carrying arms to appear within three days in his camp, and either to take service in the national cause in person or by deputy, or at least to present their allegiance to the same. For any injury that befell those who disobeyed they would have to thank themselves.

But as yet the upper classes kept aloof. The rabble who devastated their fields and drove away their cattle inspired them with small confidence, and they did not feel sure that the movement might not turn against them as well as against the Germans. It was impossible to keep discipline amongst

such troops as were the early arrivals in Rakoczi's camp. He and Bercsenyi did their best, but they had no officers, and had to accept as such those whom the rank and file chose: butchers, barbers, and tailors. But the absence of any resistance gave them time, and with time things improved.

Their first important success was the occupation of Debreczen, where they obtained the financial means for the better organization of their forces. This large town was the metropolis of the whole region beyond the Tibiscus, and always a stronghold of Protestantism. During the last war, General Caraffa had been able to extort 480,000 florins from it, which proves the wealth of its citizens. Since then new injuries—the war contribution of 1697 and Cardinal Kollonics' expulsion decree against the Protestant preachers—had been added to the old ones. To a man the citizens of Debreczen hated the German rule, and were devoted to the national cause. But they were prudent men, and so were their leaders, Stephen Dobozy, Judge of the town, and George Komaromy, afterwards Vicecomes of Bihar and one of the principal actors in the final drama at Szathmar. When they heard of Rakoczi's approach they allowed old Monay, who had been one of Tököli's captains and was a *kurucz* to the backbone, to distribute the prince's manifestos and to enlist volunteers for him. But at the same time they sent a deputation to General Nigrelli in Kassa and another to Vienna to explain and excuse their

proceedings—for what were they to do, having neither arms nor walls and all their goods and chattels in the fields?

Here Rakoczi found what he wanted. Bercsenyi made a triumphal entry, and in a few days obtained not only a voluntary contribution of 24,000 thalers, but also 1000 guns, as many swords, 6000 mantles, as many kalpecks, besides boots, saddles, and other provisions for his troops. From that moment Debreczen became what it remained to the end—a mainspring of kurucz power.

At the same time two small fortified places, Huszt and Kallo, fell into Rakoczi's power. In both the inhabitants persuaded or forced the German garrison to surrender. In the former the Commander was killed by his mutinous soldiers, in the latter there were only forty soldiers, who with their Commander, Lieutenant Eckstein, took service in the kurucz army. The surrender of these two places gave Rakoczi his first pieces of artillery.

Still more important was a success obtained by Bercsenyi against the Servians who were in arms against the kurucz rising. These new settlers<sup>1</sup> hated the Magyars, and therefore, were devoted to the Emperor's cause. All the endeavours and proclamations of Rakoczi to win them over by promises and threats proved fruitless. They had already surprised and severely damaged the auxiliary troops which were forming under Bone, and now

<sup>1</sup> See p. 75.

Bercsenyi retaliated upon them at Olaszi. This success set Bone free to join the operations with his 7000 men, and forced the German garrison of Nagy Varad to remain within their walls.

Nothing succeeds like success. Every small advantage obtained brought to Rakoczi new adhesions, which were no longer confined to the humble classes of his first followers. Already the brothers Ilosvay had joined. Now came Baron Paul Melith, a large landowner in Szathmar. Since the affair at Tiszabecs, Csaky had been quietly sitting in the castle of Szathmar. When its Commander, Count Löwenburg, called upon him to reassemble the local militia, he pleaded illness and requested Melith to do so in his place. The latter consented, placed himself at the head of the gentry, and with them rode into Rakoczi's camp to take the oath of fealty to the kurucz cause; so did Paul Orosz, who had been colonel in the Imperial army, and owned land in three counties; Janos Papay, who had been taken prisoner at Ecsed and afterwards became Rakoczi's chief diplomatic agent for all affairs with the Porte; Stephen Buday, who held high office in Bihar; Bercsenyi, Ibranyi, and many others. As these and other men of birth and breeding came, the democratic character of the kurucz army slowly changed. Rakoczi and Bercsenyi were only too glad to supply the want of officers from their rank, and to make them captains, lieutenant-colonels, colonels, and generals. When the kurucz

army was at the height of its power and success Rakoczi had twenty-five generals, eight of whom were counts, seven barons, and ten belonged to the untitled nobility. Even amongst his brigadiers there were only two of plebeian origin, Thomas Esze and Orban Czelder.

In Transylvania there were over 8000 of the Emperor's best troops, three half-regiments of infantry and three of cavalry, commanded by Count John de Rabutin,<sup>1</sup> one of Leopold's ablest Generals. Had he marched with them on Rakoczi's unformed army there is but little doubt that the whole movement might yet have been crushed. But he was under orders to keep a close watch on the southern frontier, whence greater danger was feared in Vienna than Hungary was thought capable of causing. The Porte was still smarting under the humiliation of Carlovicz, the Janissaries were thirsting for revenge for Salankemen and Zenta, and Lewis XIV.'s ambassador, the Marquis de Ferriol, was doing his utmost to incite the Sultan

<sup>1</sup> Jean Louis de Bussy Rabutin (born 1642) became a page at the court of Mme la Princesse, wife of the Grand Condé in 1664, and seven years later was implicated in a drama which led to the lifelong imprisonment of Mme la Princesse, Rabutin's flight to Austria, and the condemnation to the galleys of the third actor, a lacquey called Nicholas Duval, the mystery of which has never been cleared up. In 1905 Messrs. Octave Homberg and Fernand Joussein published a book on the life of Claude Clemence de Maille Breze, wife of the Grand Condé, but were not able to add any new information to the scanty knowledge we possess of what happened in the Hotel Condé in Paris during the night of January 13, 1672. Rabutin escaped to Austria where he entered the Imperial service and had a brilliant career. In 1683 he became Lieutenant-Colonel, in 1696 General and Governor of Transylvania, married a princess of Schleswig Holstein, and attained the rank of Field-Marshal. At the outbreak of the Rakoczi revolution he was Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Transylvania.



and his advisers to action. The Imperial resident, supported by his colleagues of England and the States General, was working in the opposite direction, but when in July an insurrection broke out in Constantinople which ended in Sultan Mustapha's dethronement and the beheading of his peace-loving ministers, the danger of war seemed extremely near. Nothing came of it but orders for the pashas of Temesvar and Belgrad to show friendly dispositions to Prince Rakoczi, and let his emissaries buy whatever they wanted on Turkish territory. But the uncertainty of the Porte's ultimate decisions paralysed Rabutin's action, and instead of being ordered to march with his whole force into Hungary he was only allowed to send a detachment of 700 cuirassiers, and some national levies under Baron Glöckelsperg,<sup>1</sup> to join, if possible, the Montecucoli regiment and observe Rakoczi's further movements.

Glöckelsperg had occupied the small fort of Somlyo, but when he learned of the approach of a kurucz force of about 4000 men he did not wish to expose his troops against such odds, and retired with them into the fort of Szathmar. Somlyo surrendered, and the national levies as well as thirty Imperial soldiers who had been left there joined the kurucz cause.

The fall of Somlyo was followed by the sur-

<sup>1</sup> Baron Glöckelsperg had risen from the ranks. His original name was Dietrich.

render of Nagy Karolyi. Far greater than the importance of the place was that of its owner, Baron, afterwards Count, Alexander Karolyi, one of the wealthiest and most influential Hungarian magnates. At the early age of twenty he had succeeded his father in the possession of his large estates and the Lord-Lieutenancy of the county of Szathmar. The father had remained loyal to the King in Vienna during the long years of the Tököli rebellion, and the son had grown up in the same views and feelings. But neither his loyalty nor his commanding position had saved him from the vexations and oppressions which Hungarians—great and small—had then to suffer from the Imperial generals. In 1691 General Löffelholz had blackened his character to Louis, Margrave of Baden. The Margrave was returning from Transylvania, and Karolyi had ridden out from Ecsed to pay his respects. He was at first received with distinction, and rode with the Field-Marshal to the walls of Szathmar. There the latter found fault with the condition of the fortifications, whereupon the Commander, Löffelholz, excused himself with the remissness of the county in furnishing the prescribed quota of gratuitous labour. Karolyi stood up for his county, and told the Margrave that it had redeemed its obligation by payment of ready money. What Löffelholz had done with it he himself ought to know best. In the eyes of the Austrian General such a speech was a manifest

sign of a rebellious disposition, and Karolyi, finding himself openly suspected by the Margrave, left Szathmar and returned to Ecsed. A year later he was kindly received in Vienna by the old Emperor and his son, King Joseph, and in 1696 took part in the conferences in Pozsony and Vienna. But in the same year he had another conflict with the new Commander of Szathmar, Count Auersperg, who had, without previous warning, sent a captain with a detachment of soldiers to Karolyi for the forcible execution of the new contribution. As they had no warrant from the King or the Commissary-General, Karolyi not only refused to pay but, arming his guards, turned the captain ignominiously out of his castle. Thanks to Bercsenyi's (who then was sitting on the Commissariat at Eperjes) energetic support, he came triumphantly out of this affair, but if men of his standing were exposed to such slights and vexations from the Imperial commanders it may be imagined how lesser people fared.

After his victory at Dolha, Karolyi went to Vienna with the standards he had taken from the rebels. He understood the situation of his country, and he meant frankly to expose it to the Imperial Council, and to obtain redress for the most urgent grievances. But he got small thanks for his pains. The Austrian Ministers were as yet far from attributing much importance to the troubles in Hungary, and the ease with which the insur-

gents had been routed by Karolyi, and Rakoczi driven back to Zawadka, confirmed them in their opinions. The Emperor praised his and his ancestors' fidelity, he saw Prince Eugen, Cardinal Kollonics, Count Mansfeld, Kaunitz, in fact everybody of consequence, he dined with Palatine Esterhazy, Count Nicholas Palffy, and even Chancellor Bucellini, but found no hearing for his propositions. The reduction of the war-tax was declared to be out of time, the organization of the national militia to be the concern of General Gombos and Count Kohary, the financial concessions which he had asked as a reward for the counties of Szathmar and Ugocsa to belong to the competency of the Treasury. He could not even obtain an order for the return of the prisoners whom he had made, and whom Count Löwenburg had forced him to surrender. When he insisted he found not only his advice slighted, but the reality of his services doubted. The Imperial Ministers said openly that the flags which he had brought were not new ones, sent by the living Rakoczi, but had belonged to the Prince's grandfather, and were taken from some depot or magazine.

While Karolyi was receiving snubs in Vienna his wife was in a worse situation at home. She was as thrifty and as keen in money matters as her husband, and now found herself menaced with the depredation of their estates. The castle of Nagy Karolyi, guarded by moats and walls,

sufficiently garrisoned and provided with heavy guns, might well have withstood the kurucz troops, but the open country was in their power. Already Melith had called and Bercsenyi written summoning Baroness Karolyi to surrender the castle, and threatening ruin and devastation if she refused. The poor lady would fain have turned to the winning side, but as yet did not know which it would be. In her embarrassment she sent Bercsenyi's letter to Count Löwenburg, bitterly complaining at the same time to Count Csaky about the poor reward she was reaping for her husband's services, to which neither his office nor his duty had obliged him. Still she did not surrender at once, but when three weeks later Bercsenyi repeated his summons, and offered her the alternative between indemnity for the past and security for the future or siege and further devastation she decided for the former.

In Karoly, Rakoczi held a council of war with Bercsenyi, Orosz, Buday, Melith, and Szucs on their further operations, when it was decided to lay siege to Szathmar, if not in the hope of taking the fort, at least to hold its German garrison in check. Ocskay and Borbely, who after the affair of Tiszabecs had both been made colonels, were sent across the Tibiscus to spread the uprising into the regions between this river and the Danube and the north-west.

Adherents now came in from all sides. In his camp before Szathmar Rakoczi received the homage

of the Perenyis, two of whom he made colonels, a third his aide-de-camp, and a fourth an usher at his court. There also arrived Baron Stephan Sennyei with his brothers Francis and Pongracz. The two latter were named colonels, but Stephan, who had held that rank in the Imperial army, was made field-marshal lieutenant, and later became Rakoczi's Chancellor.

Both Rakoczi and Bercsenyi nearly came to grief before Szathmar, the former through an attempt made against his life by an Imperial officer, the latter owing to the fall of his horse during a confusion which occurred on a night march. The Prince escaped from his adventure without any injury, but Bercsenyi was severely bruised, and for a week or two laid up in the castle of Nagy Karoly.

Rakoczi lay about a month before Szathmar. His troops having neither supplies nor training for siege work, he could not take the fort, but he took the town, and finding his army greatly increased in number, decided to leave Baron Sennyei in command of a blockading force, and to join with the bulk of his troops the forces of Bercsenyi, whom he had already previously despatched towards Tokay, whither the regiment of Montecucoli had retired. On breaking up his camp he received the news that his Colonel Deak, together with Borbely, had taken the fort of Szolnok, and utterly routed a strong force of Servians, who, under the command of the Imperial Colonel Kyba, had come to its rescue.

In the meantime, the flames had spread far beyond the Tibiscus. Ocskay and Borbely had crossed the river by the middle of August, the former taking to the north-west, the latter to the west. Wherever they appeared, new levies flocked to their standards, survivors of the Turkish and Tököli's war, soldiers of the former frontier militia, who, under the new order of things had sunk into the ranks of tax-paying peasants. Nobles and squires at first retired into fortified places and looked on, but after a longer or shorter show of resistance came out and joined. Their heart was with Rakoczi, and if fear for the future might make them hesitate, care for the present helped them to obey its promptings. The kurucz riders were masters of the open country, and ransacked the fields, pillaged the houses, and levied taxes from the tenants of labancz landowners. Already Ordody and Almassy had joined in Heves, and Szikszay, better known as Onody Deak Janos, in Borsod. Now came the lord of Krasznahorka, George Andrassy with his brothers, Nicholas, the former friar, and Mathew, soon to be followed by Stephan and Paul, who all became colonels, three of them later generals, in Rakoczi's army. Triumphantly Ocskay pushed on through the counties of Hont, Bars, Nograd, and Zolyom, into his native county of Nyitra, taking small forts, receiving the allegiance of the mining towns, Selmeecz, Körmöcz, and Bela, and pilfering and plundering everywhere. By the middle

of September he had reached the banks of the river Vagh, and taken the strong place of Leva. Had he followed up his successes, and the impression produced by them, instead of honeymooning at the last-mentioned place, there seems small doubt but that he might already then have paid the first visit to the confines of Vienna, and taken Nyitra, yea even Pozsony itself. By the end of the month there was not a county east or north of the Danube where kurucz troops had not made their appearance, with the sole exception of Pozsony; and Rakoczi was able to write to Lewis XIV., from whom he had just received a subsidy of 93,000 livres, that the whole country to the Danube was in his power, that he had taken five fortresses, and was enclosing eight more. The representations he had made in Poland to du Héron and Bonnac had proved true.

As towns and forts surrendered, men of standing and importance who had taken refuge in them came out and swelled the kurucz ranks. With the fall of Gacs came Andrew Török, Adam Gyürky, Daniel Bulyowski, Paul Rhaday, afterwards Chancellor of Rakoczi's court, and author of the famous manifesto "Recrudescent." Still dearer to Rakoczi's heart was the arrival of Adam Vaj, his former fellow-prisoner in Wiener Neustadt, who after the fall of Hajnacskö, had retired into Gacs, but now rode into the Prince's camp in spite of the bond which the Imperial Ministers had made him sign after his



liberation. After the fall of Kekkő came Adam Balassa, Francis Berthoty, both colonels, the two brothers Rethy, both officers in the Imperial army, and many northern squires, Semseys, Revays, Orban Czelder, Nicholas Mariassy, old Andrew Radics, the former defender of Munkacs, and Baron Janos Pongracz. Nowhere was there any support for the Imperial cause, not even amongst the German citizens of the eastern towns. They were all Protestants, and had had as much to suffer from the intolerance of the Kollonics regime as their Magyar brethren. Nor were the Magyar soldiers of the Emperor to be trusted against their countrymen. When Ocskay rode into Leva a reserve squadron of the hussar regiment in which he had formerly served was just starting to join the colours in Italy. Without drawing a sword they to a man went over to Ocskay.

On his march to Tokay Rakoczi was met by Bercsenyi. With the Commander-in-Chief came a new arrival, Alexander Karolyi. He had left Vienna sore in mind on August 16. When at the gates the toll-keeper had exacted a ducat; Karolyi paid, but vowed that he would get it back. On his way to Kassa he learned what had happened on his estates. The town was full of refugees, nobles, and others; Count Nigrelli could or would not assign him any quarters, and he had to find lodgings as best he could. In the bitterness of his resentment he wrote to his wife's uncle, Count Stephan Kohary,

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that his German garrison had surrendered his castle, that his wife and her mother could not find refuge in Szathmar, that for eight weeks he had been without news from them, but that it was still harder that, having arrived here, not on his own but on His Majesty's service, he had not been thought worthy of a lodging. He further said that he had run out of money, and could not see upon what he was to live. There seems no doubt that then and there he made up his mind to go over to the kurucz side.

Nigrelli<sup>1</sup> died on September 23, after a protracted illness. Glöckelsperg was appointed his successor, but was shut up in Szathmar, and Montecucoli and his Lieutenant-Colonel, Veterani, son of the noble General who had fallen at Lugos, took temporary command, in spite of there being Hungarians of higher military rank in the place, such as Francis Barkoczy and Emerich Gombos. Karolyi spent his time in banqueting with Montecucoli and Veterani, and playing cards with Barkoczy; but in secret he was making preparations for leaving the town and making overtures to Bercsenyi. On the 7th of October he was still drinking with Montecucoli, but

<sup>1</sup> The pleasant and gentlemanly relations which he had always entertained with the Hungarian nobles in his district, his connection with the Esterhazy family through the marriage of his daughter with Count Anthony, afterwards one of Rakoczi's Generals and foremost adherents, together with his failure, due to the insufficiency of his means, to suppress the rising at the outset, have caused popular rumour and chroniclers of the period to suspect him of connivance, and to cast suspicion on his fidelity. In the archives of the War Department in Vienna not a shadow of justification is to be found for this accusation.

on the next day left Kassa, and on the 9th was in Bercsenyi's camp.

His adherence was the most important personal gain which the kurucz cause had as yet made. Of the passionate fire which burnt in Rakoczi, Bercsenyi, Bottjan, Esterhazy, and so many of the minor leaders, there was but little in him, and personal motives no doubt largely swayed him in his present step. He was a hard-headed man of sound judgment, with a keen eye for the main chance, who would not allow his feelings to run away with him, nor push either devotion to his country or hatred of Germans to the point of self-abnegation. But he was a Hungarian to the core, who loved his country, spoke no other language but his own and Latin, and felt all his interests and inclinations indissolubly rooted in his home. That a man who had so much to lose, and was so careful not to lose anything, should throw in his fortunes with Rakoczi, augured well for the prospects of the cause, and drew the adherence of thousands of minor people in his wake. He soon became, and remained to the end, one of the most influential leaders in the Hungarian Confederacy, in fact its most important member after the two original leaders. On receiving his allegiance, Rakoczi made him forthwith a general, and entrusted him with the command of the forces in the region between the Tibiscus and the Danube.

While these things were happening in Hungary

the tide swept also into Transylvania. Rabutin<sup>1</sup> was still sitting in Szeben, watching the Turkish frontier, husbanding his forces, and distrusting the Magyar dignitaries and nobles. In the middle of September he moved out, but only to revictual and garrison the forts of Kövar and Kolozvar. A force of a few thousands of militia, which he sent under the command of Samuel Bethlen for the eventual succour of Glöckelsperg, was surprised and routed by Ilosvay.

Count Pekry,<sup>2</sup> Mikes,<sup>3</sup> Stephen Thoroczkay,

<sup>1</sup> Rabutin had convoked as many of the chief nobles and influential men as he could to Szeben, and kept them there with their families and treasures. When all the open country had passed into the hands of the kuracs, he sent a few of them whom he trusted the most to organise a counter rising. Amongst them were Pekry, Michael Teleky, Michael Mikes, and Baron Szava.

<sup>2</sup> Lawrence Pekry was then about fifty years old. He belonged to one of the foremost and richest families of Transylvania, and had already an eventful and chequered career behind him. His wife was first cousin to Emerich Tokoli, and he himself a school-fellow and intimate friend of the "kuracs King." After the latter's split with the older Teleky, Apaffy's all-powerful Minister, the latter had Pekry accused of complicity in Beldy's plot, arrested, and his estates confiscated (1679). Although Pekry obtained his liberty from Apaffy, his estates remained in Teleky's hands; and the persecutions against him being continued, and proceedings for high treason (felony) instituted in 1686, he took refuge in Hungary and then went to Vienna, in order to obtain from the Emperor restitution of his wife's confiscated estates. (She was a Petroczy, and all her family had joined Tokoli's cause.) Hitherto a zealous Protestant, he became now Roman Catholic, and not only succeeded in his suit, but gained favour at Court, entered the army, took part in the reconquest of Buda, and became in the course of a few years Chamberlain, Member of the Privy Council, General, and finally, in 1692, Count. In Vienna he had met and formed friendly relations with Bercsenyi, who was a distant cousin. In 1690 he had returned triumphantly to Transylvania, retaken possession of his estates, and had been appointed Lord-Lieutenant of the county of Fehér and Captain of Udvarhely. Entrusted by Rabutin with organising the insurrection of the counties, he had been taken prisoner by Rakoczi's troops and Orsai's old Tokolians, and sent into Rakoczi's camp in Hungary, where he at once offered his allegiance to the Prince. He was forthwith made General, and became one of the foremost of Rakoczi's leaders and councillors. He was a brave soldier, a clever and unassuming political leader, but a great intriguer. On his joining the kuracs cause he returned to his original Protestant faith.

<sup>3</sup> Mikes was taken prisoner together with Pekry; Szava had been captured before; Teleky joined the kuracs from his own free will at once.

Baron Szava, to whom Rabutin had entrusted the organization of the local resistance in different counties, fared no better. They were defeated, captured, and turned kurucz. Their example was followed by Bethlens, Josikas, Banffys, Telekys, Gyulays, Lazars, in fact by the bearers of every illustrious name in the land. Even some Saxon towns followed. At the beginning of 1704 Rabutin still held Szeben and some other strong places, but with their exception Transylvania owned Rakoczi for lord.

The powers that were in Vienna could no longer entertain any illusions as to the gravity of the Hungarian crisis. The year 1703 had been altogether an unfavourable one for the allies; but if Parliament grumbled in England and the States General wavered in their allegiance because of the meagreness of the results attained, the outlook in Vienna was far more serious and gloomy. The Elector's invasion of the Tyrol had ended in failure; but he had won the first battle of Höchstädt in September, and stood threatening on the western frontier of Austria. Now a new enemy had arisen in the east, and if the two could join forces, as was the plan of Rakoczi, not only the great results of the last Turkish War might be lost, but the worst days of 1683 lived over again. Already, on the 6th of October, a proclamation had been issued in Vienna, enjoining its inhabitants to provide themselves, in view of possible contingencies, with pro-

visions for a year or to leave the town. On the next day the great conference assembled to deliberate on Hungarian affairs. The King of the Romans presided. With the exception of Count Wratislaw, who was accompanying the young King of Spain as far as London, all the great men of the day were present. There was Prince Eugen, who had just been placed at the head of the "Hofkriegsrath"; there was his inefficient predecessor Count Mansfeld, Prince of Fondi, whom the favour of the old Emperor had solaced with the office of "Oberstkämmerer" (Lord Chamberlain); Cardinal Kollonics; Prince Salm, King Joseph's former Governor and soon his Prime Minister, who did not like Prince Eugen, but liked Hungarians still less; Chancellor Count Buccellini, Rakoczi's inquisitor and judge; Counts Joerger, Oettingen and Kaunitz; Count Harrach, the former Ambassador in Madrid, who had signally failed in his mission; Count Gundacker Starhemberg, an able and honest man who, as president of the "Hofkammer" (head of the Treasury), had to find the means, wherewith to execute the decisions of the conferences but who—as he himself said—could not make something out of nothing, for the Almighty alone could do that. Of Hungarians there were but two, the old Palatine, Prince Esterhazy, and the Chancellor Matyasowski, both thoroughly devoted to the Court, but just therefore discredited by the nation.

About the desirability of energetic repression

there could be no question, but the more so about its possibility. The Emperor's troops were battling on the Rhine in Italy, on the Upper Danube and in the Tyrol. They were none too many wherever they were, and the allies were most susceptible about any being withdrawn from their fields of interest. Money there was none at all. The financial resources of Austria under Emperor Leopold had never been in proportion to his world policies, and the death of his Court Jew, Oppenheimer, in the preceding month of May had dealt the finishing stroke to their chronic disorder. Want of horses, of provisions, of ammunition, in short, of money, had been the continual and but too just complaint of Prince Eugen during his two preceding campaigns in Italy. Now that he had seen the inside of things in Vienna he wrote to his then friend, Count Guido Starhemberg, that if the Monarchy stood on the point of a needle and could be saved by 50,000 florins it would have to perish.

The decisions taken were the logical outcome of this situation. Conciliation was to be tried. The outstanding part of the war contribution in Hungary for the current year was remitted, an amnesty granted to all rebels voluntarily returning to obedience, and further alleviation of grievances promised. At the same time repressive measures were decreed. Troops were withdrawn from the camp at Passau, some others from the Margrave of Baden's army, and sent to Hungary; the local

militia of the counties Pozsony, Nyitra, Komarom, and Esztergom was to be put into the field under Counts Kohary, Forgach, Esterhazy, and Colonel Bottyan; a counter insurrection organized in Croatia, and another on the Lower Danube amongst the Servians under Colonel Kyba, who already lay dying in Szolnok from the wounds he had received in his encounter with Deak.

A price of 10,000 florins was put on Rakoczi's and Bercsenyi's heads, and in order that one wolf might slay another, every Hungarian who would kill a rebel was promised half of his estates. The solicitude of the conference extended even to the wives of the two Hungarian leaders. Since their husbands' escapes both Princess Rakoczi and Countess Bercsenyi<sup>1</sup> had been detained in Vienna, where they enjoyed outward freedom, but were kept under strict surveillance. It was now decreed that, because of their suspicious agitations, they should be arrested and removed to the fort of Glatz, in Silesia. This decision was, however, not confirmed by the Emperor, who declared that although the two ladies did not do much good in Vienna, and Princess Rakoczi talked far too much, they had not been convicted of any positive crime, and might therefore remain where they were. But two months later, when Bercsenyi had

<sup>1</sup> She was his second wife—Countess Christina Csaky. Like his first wife, she was eleven years older than he. Like her, she had also been married twice before. Bercsenyi himself remarried a third time in Rodosto.



defeated the Imperial troops and crossed the river Vagh, his wife was hurriedly sent to Styria.

The measures of the conference came too late. Remission of taxes, amnesty, and promises of redress could no longer allay the long pent-up discontent of Hungary, and its uprising had passed the point where it could be beaten down by a force of 5000 or 6000 regular troops. Rakoczi had now an organized army, consisting of eleven regiments of infantry and eight of cavalry, besides his guards, numbering altogether about 30,000 men, while fresh levies were daily coming in and rapidly forming into new regiments.<sup>1</sup>

The command of the Imperial forces was given to Count Schlick,<sup>2</sup> who had lately fought with small success against the Elector, and whose name, from his behaviour during the Turkish War, was hateful to the Hungarians. His new campaign was short and signally disastrous.

While the Austrian General was preparing his advance from Pozsony, Rakoczi lay with about 4000 men before Tokaj, and Bercsenyi with 9000 in Eger. He had as yet been unable to take the fort, but he had made as important a conquest by persuading Bishop Thelekessy, who on his approach had intended to leave the town, to remain in his

<sup>1</sup> Stepney's despatch to Hedges, October 20, 1703. State Paper Office, Germany, No. 168.

<sup>2</sup> Leopold, Count Schlick of Bassano, had been second plenipotentiary at the peace negotiations of Carlowitz, and always more successful in diplomacy and at court than in the field. His strongest support at court was his connection with Wratislaw, whose sister he had married.

diocese and to join the national cause. Although all its principal leaders—Rakoczi, Bercsenyi, Karolyi, and later, Esterhazy and Forgach—were as good Catholics as Emperor Leopold himself, the cause itself had for over a century been so much interwoven with that of Protestant rights that the Catholic clergy kept aloof from it. The accession of one of their high dignitaries was therefore a distinct and most welcome gain to Rakoczi.

The small army with which Schlick set out on his march eastward numbered between 9000 to 10,000 men. But of these only 5200 were regular Imperial soldiers, the rest were Hungarian militia whom Generals Kohary and Forgach had levied in the west, and Colonels Antal Esterhazy and Bottjan in the south. At first everything went most smoothly. On the sixth day after he had started from Pozsony, Schlick surprised and routed Ocskay at Leva, and retook not only the town but also its forts. Without waiting for the reinforcements which were forming in his rear under General Ritschan, he pushed on for the reconquest of the mining towns, which returned to their former allegiance with the same ease with which they had left it, and by the middle of November arrived at Zolyom. The ease with which he had scattered Ocskay's troops, and the small resistance he had met with everywhere, made him and his Generals undervalue the enemy, and Forgach wrote to Csaky from Zolyom on November 13 :—

Schlick has gone to Besterce; he despises the enemy. We are waiting for General Ritschan, and then we will go for the liberators. Nicholas (Bercsenyi) is in Losoncz, from where he writes a great deal. Words he has as many as you may wish, but he does not like the smell of gunpowder.

The Hungarian Commander-in-Chief, as soon as he learned of Schlick's approach, made up his mind to meet him, and for this purpose ordered Karolyi to come up with his troops from the south. After their juncture at Losoncz, and the arrival of some more Polish reinforcements, he had about 20,000 troops, mostly green levies but burning with the desire to give proof of their mettle. Besides, he knew the enemy better than the enemy knew him. A few days before their meeting he had written to Karolyi, "There are only a few Germans, most of them (Schlick's troops) are county militia. I hope to God he will soon turn them."

Bercsenyi proved a better prophet than Forgach. He never gave Ritschan time to arrive, but, while Schlick, who with 600 cuirassiers was celebrating the Emperor's anniversary in Besztercze, was still absent, attacked Forgach with such fury that his troops—Germans as well as militia—were huddled back into the town of Zolyom in utter confusion. Learning of this defeat, Schlick retired with his cuirassiers to Bajmocz to effect, if possible, his juncture with Ritschan, and sent word to Forgach to escape as well as he could, and to the recently reconquered towns to swim with the tide and wait

for better times. Forgach, Esterhazy, Kohary and the Imperial Colonel, Viard, succeeded in getting out of the town; but their levies dispersed or went over to the enemy. Of the German troops about 2000 had been killed, wounded, or scattered. When a few days later Schlick held a review of his remaining forces, he found them to number only 3000. With these he met Ritschan, who, in his turn, had also had an unfortunate encounter with a kurucz detachment, and then retired with him to Pozsony.

The moral effect of Bercsenyi's victory was still greater. The mining towns at once fell back into his power, and this time were heavily mulcted for the ease with which they had turned coats. The Servians, when on their march to the north they learned what had happened, fell back into their country. Of the 1400 men whom Esterhazy had led into Schlick's camp only 300 returned to their homes, the rest became kurucz or dispersed. Forgach's and Kohary's levies did the same. Nor could their officers resist the patriotic wave which was sweeping the country. Brave Stephen Ebeczky, who soon became Bercsenyi's special favourite, joined at this time. So did a less valuable acquisition, Baron Gaspar Pongracz, Ocskay's former lieutenant-colonel, who but a few months ago had caused his arrest. From everywhere counties and open towns sent in their allegiance. Small forts surrendered. Ocskay retook Leva, Karolyi the castle of Galgocz,

where he met the Countesses Forgach and Antal Esterhazy, and two days later Sempye, where soon afterwards Bercsenyi established his headquarters.

A gain of yet greater value was the accession of Colonel Bottjan to the kurucz cause. The old soldier, whose bravery has become legendary in Hungarian history, and whose kindness of heart made him the idol not only of his men but also of the common people whose lands he rode over, had been wounded in a personal encounter with Ocskay before the battle, and therefore could not leave Zolyom with Forgach and the other Generals. When the fort surrendered on the 7th of December, Bercsenyi's lieutenants, Radvanszky, Thomas Ebeczky, and Tolvay played with such effect on his patriotic fibre that then and there he gave promises of his allegiance to Rakoczi. During forty years he had served under the Imperial colours, fought with distinction in Hungary, Servia, and Bulgaria against the Turks, and learned the art of war under such leaders as Montecucoli, Zrinyi, Prince Charles of Lorraine, the Margrave of Baden, Veterani and the great Prince Eugen himself. It was no light resolution for the old soldier to change his fealty, and he had resisted several offers which had been made to him before. But he, too, was a Hungarian to the core, and now love of his nation prevailed. Rakoczi fully appreciated the importance of such an acquisition, and forthwith issued the patents appointing Bottjan a general,

and giving him supreme command of the country beyond the Danube. As yet, however, the thing was to be kept secret, because Bottjan wished to return to Esztergom, where he had held command before and had left his wife and valuables. Solitude for them was not his only motive, for he had formed a plan to bring about the surrender of this important fortress.

With the exception of Pozsony and some other fortified places the whole country left of the Danube was now in kurucz power, and Bercsenyi prepared to carry the terrors of war into the enemy's country. From his camp at Sempte he issued a proclamation to the inhabitants of Moravia and Lower Austria, warning them not to take arms against the Hungarian nation, who would help them to recover their own long-lost liberties. To give weight to his words he ordered Karolyi and Ocskay to cross the river March, which formed the frontier of the country, destroy the defences of the Austrians, and make a salutary impression on the people. His orders were swiftly executed. On the morning of Christmas Eve Karolyi and Ocskay passed the March at Theben with about 3000 troops, destroyed the earthworks between Schlosshof and Marchegg, burned the Imperial castle at the former place, captured its commander, Count Oppersdorf, and after having pushed their raid within 14 miles of Vienna, returned next day into the camp of Sempte with their prisoners and booty.

This was the first of the many predatory inroads into the Austrian provinces, which for the next seven years became a regular feature of the kurucz warfare. The frontier districts of Moravia, Lower Austria, and Styria had alike to suffer from the flying visits of the kurucz raiders, who generally disappeared as fast as they had come, but who invariably left destruction and waste in their rear. It was in these raids that Ocskay excelled, and that he earned the surnames of "Prince of Fire" and "Rakoczi's Lightning Rod." Plunder was undoubtedly a main incentive, but not the only motive, for which they were ordered by Rakoczi and his Commander-in-Chief, for they often caused a diversion in the operations of the Austrian Generals in Hungary. When the Austrian Ministers and courtiers complained about the cruel devastation of their towns, castles, and villages, the Hungarian leaders answered by pointing to the mode of warfare in Hungary, where certainly Heister's and Rabutin's soldiers, and still worse the Servian levies, behaved as if they were engaged in a work of simple extirpation. They might have further pointed to other examples. If war is hell now, it was doubly so in the seventeenth century, when the laying waste of the enemy's country was a received mode of operation. The French had done so in the Palatinate not long ago. The Austrian Board of War, when they drew up the plan of the Bavarian campaign for 1703, had instructed General Schlick—

in case he should be too weak to achieve anything against the Elector in the open field—to lay his country in ashes and make a Tartar wall of it for the protection of Austria. And the deeds of the Bavarians during their short-lived invasion of the Tyrol rivalled the performances of the French and the intentions of the Austrians.

Already before Karolyi's raid consternation and alarm had reigned in Vienna. The Emperor's furniture had been removed from his summer palace in the Favoriten to the Hofburg, the erection of those outer lines of fortification, which have only disappeared in the lifetime of the present generation, had been commenced, and the inhabitants of the suburbs had flocked into the inner town, crowding the gates and streets. Count Schlick was deprived of his command, the Austrian militia called to arms, and Count Traun, the Land-Marshal of Austria, went in person to supervise the fortifications on the March. On December 12 the crown of St. Stephen, which was always guarded in Pozsony, was brought to Vienna. But these measures dealt only with the exigencies of the hour. The question was what to do with regard to the Hungarian Revolution, and it was great enough to require the attendance of the greatest man. So Prince Eugen was sent to Pozsony to devise for the situation, to provide and organize new means of forcible repression, or if possible to arrange a peaceable accommodation.



## CHAPTER III

First negotiations for peace; English and Dutch mediation; the situation in Europe—The Emperor's military forces and financial resources; the Imperial Commanders in Hungary, Heister and Palffy.

"If Austria is not strong enough to carry on the war simultaneously in Italy and on the Rhine, and to suppress the rebels, the only way for her is to pacify the latter by giving them good terms." Thus wrote Sir Charles Hedges, then Secretary of State, to Mr. Whitworth, his chargé d'affaires in Vienna, instructing him at the same time to offer England's good offices for the purpose. The same advices and offers came from The Hague. Unpalatable as they were, they could not simply be laid aside in Vienna as a previous similar suggestion from the King of Poland had been. For the attainment of the objects of the great war against Lewis XIV. Austria was altogether dependent on England and Holland; at all times during its twelve years' duration they were masters of the situation,<sup>1</sup> but at no other moment was there a more dire need for their

<sup>1</sup> "The maritime Powers have the *statum totius belli* in their hands, and therefore are, and always will be, masters of the peace." Wratislaw to Charles, August 10, 1710.

assistance than in the early winter of 1704, when the Elector of Bavaria had taken Passau, when his juncture with Rakoczi's forces under the walls of Vienna seemed a contingency of the near future, and when Marlborough's assent to the transfer of the campaign from the banks of the Meuse to those of the Danube seemed a matter of life or death to the Imperial Court.

Giving terms to the rebels was rather a euphemism, for they had sought none, and it was as yet to be ascertained whether they would take any. It was a bitter pill for Emperor Leopold and his Ministers to approach Rakoczi and Bercsenyi, on whose heads they had set a price but a few weeks ago; but if it was to be swallowed, it might as well be done without the intervention of foreign physicians. As a result of the Emperor's divided councils and his own hesitations, steps were taken to make direct overtures to the Hungarian leaders. Having asked and obtained, through Bishop Pyber, a safe conduct for his private secretary, Jeszensky, the Palatine sent the latter to Bercsenyi ostensibly to ascertain the causes of the rising, but in reality to see how its leaders, and notably Bercsenyi, could be appeased. At the same time an emissary of a different kind was despatched to Rakoczi. During his residence in Vienna he had been much impressed by the charms of a lady of rank, and it was now thought that her seductions might be usefully employed on him. Accordingly the fair widow was prevailed

upon to travel in midwinter from Vienna to Tokaj. She did not get there, however, without some adventures, as the Imperial commander of Buda, not knowing the nature of her errand, stopped her on her journey, and only set her free after Prince Eugen had sent a special messenger post-haste for the purpose.<sup>1</sup>

These secret and confidential missions were but the overture of a regular diplomatic action into which the Imperial Court entered very much against its wishes, but which for the next three years held not only its own and its allies' attention, but became a matter of interest to almost every Cabinet in Europe. In the beginning the fear of derogating the Emperor's dignity, and of encouraging the rebels by negotiating with them, was prominent in the considerations of the Austrian statesmen, and even Prince Eugen, whose range of views was higher than those of the other Imperial councillors, warned the Palatine not to send anybody of official character to Bercsenyi. But from Lisbon to Moscow, and from Stockholm to Naples, Europe stood in flames, the Hungarian cause had become part of the world's affairs, and those reserves and precautions had to be dropped. Official negotiators were appointed, the English and Dutch mediation accepted, and formal conferences<sup>1</sup> held, where the Imperial plenipotentiaries, with a cardinal of the House of Lorraine at their head, treated with those

<sup>1</sup> Whitworth to Hedges, January 5, 1704, State Paper Office, No. 173.

of Rakoczi through the channel of the mediators. The long and arduous labours came to nought. For their failure both sides have laid the responsibility at their adversaries' door, and to this day the judgments of Hungarian and Austrian historians reflect the passions of bygone centuries, each side accusing the other of lack of sincerity, measureless pretensions, and arrogance.

Early in 1704 Rakoczi had issued a manifesto to all the princes and powers of the Christian world to explain and justify his cause.<sup>1</sup> Like the famous declaration which went forth from Philadelphia seventy-two years later, it was an appeal to the public opinion of mankind and an arraignment of the Prince against whom he had taken arms. Referring to the causes of former Hungarian revolutions, it exposed the griefs the country had suffered during the present reign, and declared the resolution to free it from the Austrian yoke.

In Vienna they had underrated the importance of the movement when it began, and now they were underrating the aims and ability of the leaders. Widely as the Emperor's Austrian councillors differed on most questions, and bitterly as they intrigued against each other,<sup>2</sup> they were all united in their judgment on men and things in Hungary. The standard-bearers of the regime now drawing

<sup>1</sup> This is the manifesto beginning "Recrudescunt antiqua vulnera," written in elaborate Latin.

<sup>2</sup> *Feldzüge des Prinzen Eugen*, vol. v. p. 25; Whitworth to Hedges, January 16, 1704.

to its end, the old Emperor's contemporaries, the Kollonics, Oettingen,<sup>1</sup> Mansfeld,<sup>2</sup> Buccellini,<sup>3</sup> Harrach,<sup>4</sup> and others, naturally saw in the Hungarian leaders nothing but ambitious rebels, who had only their own aggrandisement at heart. Nor did the men of the dawning reign, who had no share in, and bore no responsibility for, the past, take a juster or more lenient view. Prince Eugen himself, who invariably had his master's and not his own interests at heart, and who frankly and loyally exposed to him the inefficiency and the abuses of his administration, judged the moment to be one for repression and not for conciliation. In the representations he wrote from Pozsony to the Emperor he unceasingly insisted on the necessity of energetic measures, on the speedy collecting of reinforcements, on the providing of the necessary funds for paying the troops, be it from the great nobles and the clergy, who might well be put to contribution in the present crisis. The only convinced advocates of reconciliation were the labancz Hungarians, who, though faithfully devoted to the

<sup>1</sup> Count Wolfgang Wallerstein Oettingen (born 1629), who had been first plenipotentiary for the conclusion of the Peace of Carlowitz, was then President of the Reichshofrath.

<sup>2</sup> Count, afterwards Prince, Henry Franz Mansfeld (born 1640) had succeeded Count Starheimberg as President of the Board of War (*Hofkriegsrath*), in which office he had to make place for Prince Eugen two years later, and afterwards became Lord High Chamberlain (*Oberstkämmerer*), a great mediocrity. He died in 1715.

<sup>3</sup> Buccellini had succeeded Stratmann as Chancellor for Austria, and as such had conducted the trial of Rakocsi.

<sup>4</sup> Count Harrach had been ambassador in Madrid, and afterwards succeeded Prince Dietrichstein as Obersthofmeister. With regard to this office see pp. 51 and 69.

Court, in the service of which they had incurred their unpopularity at home, yet felt for the wrongs of their country. In the days of peace their influence in Vienna had been small, and the old Palatine, than whom nobody had rendered greater services to the dynasty, had seen his mild representations on his country's behalf spurned. Now in the days of pressure the Emperor would have been well disposed to listen to their advices, but so deeply were they discredited with the nation that their employment was considered to do more harm than good.<sup>1</sup>

The private correspondence of the kurucz leaders and the despatches of Whitworth, which are the chief sources for the history of those days, do not tell us how the fair emissary fared in Rakoczi's camp. With Bercsenyi Jeszensky achieved nothing. To his hints at office, rank, and donations the Hungarian General replied that he had not taken arms for his family's promotion but for public liberty, and at the Palatine's question regarding the causes of the uprising he simply expressed astonishment that it should have been asked. The decision about peace or war belonged to the nation, who would express their wish in a diet held on the model of

<sup>1</sup> Count Dietrichstein writes on February 9 to King Charles III.: "We have had a conference here on Hungarian matters. The emissary from the rebels did not think it advisable that the magnates as the cardinal (Kollonics), the palatine, chancellor, etc., should assist, and it seems that in this way nothing can be achieved. I think therefore that we shall avail ourselves of Germans only." *Hof- und Staatsarchiv in Vienna*, Fasc. 72 f., *Grosse Correspondenz*, letters of Count Dietrichstein to Charles III. (VI.) 1703-1706.

those which Bethlen and Tókoli had called, and if the Court was sincere, neither he himself nor his countrymen would show themselves adverse to an arrangement. But they did not want the Palatine's mediation, as they considered him an accomplice in the subversion of the constitution.

If the Austrian statesmen had expected to sow jealousy between Rakoczi and Bercsenyi by addressing their first serious overtures to the latter, their hopes were doomed to disappointment. On Bishop Pyber's application Bercsenyi had issued the passports for Jeszensky, but forthwith informed Rakoczi of what he had done. Voices were not wanting in the Court of the Prince to accuse the General of having outstepped his powers and wanting to concentrate all threads in his hands. But Rakoczi behaved with consummate tact. He implicitly trusted Bercsenyi, but fearing that, by showing the full measure of his confidence, he might be thought a mere puppet in his friend's hands, he approved his conduct, but frankly informed him of the suspicions it had given rise to, and sent his own passports for Esterhazy's envoy.

The Palatine's mediation being discarded, the Court cast its eyes on Archbishop Szechenyi, whose courageous opposition to Cardinal Kollonics' schemes a few years before had endeared him to the nation. On the 2nd of January he received the Emperor's commission as official negotiator, and at the end of the month had an interview with Bercsenyi

and Karolyi at Leben Szent Miklos. The two kurucz generals declared that they could not enter into any negotiations without orders from Rakoczi, but left no doubt in the Archbishop's mind that a foreign guarantee would be insisted upon, and that unless this point was conceded no propositions for an arrangement would be entertained.<sup>1</sup> Rakoczi himself, to whom Szechenyi now wrote, spoke in still stronger terms, and in a letter, which reflected the bitterness of his recollections, declared that he would readily swallow the gilded bait now offered if he did not know from experience the taste of Austrian pills, but that after the lessons of the past something more was required than promises of redress at a future diet.

Following up Bercsenyi's thought, Szechenyi had proposed to the Prince that as he was master of the country he should convoke a diet. But the idea met with scant approval on either side. Emperor Leopold would not hear of a diet called by any one but himself, and Rakoczi saw in the proposition an Austrian snare tending to sow discord amongst his adherents. The majority of them were Protestants, he and his principal generals Catholics. It seemed unavoidable that the former would bring their grievances before the diet and insist on the restitution of their churches and other property as stipulated by the Treaty of Linz. Already the

<sup>1</sup> Szechenyi to the Emperor, January 28, the same to Rakoczi on the same date, and Rakoczi to Szechenyi, February 5. *Histoire des Révolutions*, pp. 187-191.



Emperor's confidential emissaries were working on their fears and jealousies, and pointing to Lewis XIV.'s treatment of Protestants in his own country, warning them of their danger from Rakoczi and his Catholic allies. In order to allay their fears the Prince had to assure them on oath that France and Bavaria would never interfere with their internal affairs, even if their armies joined with his on Hungarian soil. Under the circumstances he judged the holding of a diet to be inopportune, and after a further exchange of correspondence invited Szechenyi to a personal interview at Gyöngyös.

In vain also did the Archbishop try to convince Rakoczi and Bercsenyi that what he called an intrinsic safeguard, viz. the bestowal of all offices on Hungarians and the confirmation of their right to carry arms, was far more valuable than a guarantee from foreign powers. In vain did the Emperor suggest that, if his Hungarian subjects wanted an intermediary, the task should be entrusted to his son, their crowned king. In vain did King Joseph write himself to Szechenyi and declare that although he had, in obedience to his coronation oath, hitherto abstained from all interference with the government of Hungary, he stood ready to employ his mediation now if it was asked for. The Hungarian leaders would not yield, and, distasteful as it seemed to the Imperial Court, it had to consent, if not to the demanded guarantee, at least to the principle of foreign intervention. On March 4 the Emperor

informed Szechenyi that he had accepted the offices of his good allies, England and Holland, for the pacification of Hungary. But before coming to this resolution another attempt was made to win Bercsenyi.

In the early days of the Hungarian uprising everybody in Austria—and in fact in Hungary as well—considered Bercsenyi its intellectual head. If it required the lustre of Rakoczi's name to carry Hungary, the power of organization and command seemed to belong to his older friend. Since his twelfth year Rakoczi had lived but a few years in the country, and then quietly on his estates. Everybody knew his name, but very few knew him personally at the time he reappeared from his exile in Poland. Bercsenyi had held high office, had been constantly before the public eye, and everybody who was anybody knew him and he them. He seemed to have created order out of chaos, and he not only held supreme military command, but was supposed to be the only person possessing the requisite talents for holding it. If he could be detached from the cause, it might naturally fall to pieces by itself. Historical examples were not wanting. Perenyi had been won by the Chancellorship in the sixteenth century—why not Bercsenyi? So a second confidential mission was sent to him, this time with the positive offer of the Hungarian Chancellorship. Well might Baron Gabor Tolvay and Jeszensky, who were selected for the office, lay stress on the point that to

the Chancellor belonged the execution of all laws and treaty stipulations, that therefore his tenure of the office would be the most effectual security for his party, and that he could accept it without a stain on his honour. It stands to reason, although it is not mentioned in the State papers, that they must have hinted at still higher possibilities. The Palatine was old, besides discredited before the nation. Who would be more fit for his succession than the man who would have made peace between the crown and the nation?

As a further token of their amiable dispositions for Bercsenyi, the Imperial Government resolved to release his wife from her confinement in Styria, and to return her to her husband. The occasion was made one of pomp and honour. Prince Eugen ordered the escort which was to accompany the Countess from Vienna to Pozsony. From there she started in a carriage drawn by six horses, 200 German dragoons followed, 500 kurucz hussars waited outside the town for her. All together they arrived at the town of Szent György (St. George), where she had 400 ducats (about £200)<sup>1</sup> distributed amongst the German soldiers, besides giving a banquet to the entire escort, at which Hungarians and Germans toasted together the House of Bercsenyi. The tips of the greatest people nowa-

<sup>1</sup> A German ducat was about 10 francs of nowadays, a Hungarian ducat a little more, about 10s. It is most difficult to compare the buying power of money then and now. *Vide* d'Avenel's work on the subject. Roughly speaking, it might be estimated four to five times higher than now.

days seem very poor when compared to the largesses of their ancestors two hundred years ago.

But Bercsenyi was not to be won by either baits or blandishments. His was a proud and domineering nature, but high as his ambitions soared, they were indissolubly linked to the cause which he had espoused. He answered Tolvay and Jeszensky as he had answered before, and as he was shortly afterwards to repeat to Hamel Bruyninx, the Dutch envoy who came to see him on a similar errand. He was a kind and most attentive husband, and he received his wife with all the display they both were fond of. But it was she who doted on him, and who, in spite of her labancz connections,<sup>1</sup> soon became as stout a kurucz as himself. And glad as he was to see her out of Austrian power, her numerous attendants and all the paraphernalia of her establishment were rather a strain on his present way of life. After the joy of the first meeting had worn off he wrote to Karolyi, whose wife had also wanted to join him in the camp, "that he was quite right not to let her come, for woman is sweet, but a wife to a warrior only a bother."

While these offers and attentions came to one of the erstwhile proscribed exiles, a royal crown came within reach of the other. Charles XII. was then in the full swing of his wonderful career, and

<sup>1</sup> Her daughter Marguerite by her first husband Erdödy was married to Count Kery, one of the most faithful and trusted adherents of the Court, afterwards Hungarian Master of the Horse of Emperor Joseph I.

sternly resolved to punish Augustus of Saxony by the loss of his Polish crown. At his bidding the diet in Warsaw declared the throne vacant,<sup>1</sup> and shortly afterwards the Cardinal Primate Radziowski, with the understanding of Lubomirski, Sieniawski, and some other grandees of the French faction, offered the nomination to Rakoczi. The value of the offer depended on Charles XII., but considering his relations with France and Lewis XIV.'s views on the matter there seemed no reasonable doubt that his consent might be obtained. But Rakoczi had no wish to entertain the offer. He felt that he owed himself to his own country, and that he could not in honour abandon her cause for a foreign crown. Nor did he judge that her interests allowed any meddling with Poland's complications. So he sent Paul Rhaday and Michael Okolicsany to thank the cardinal and to explain his refusal. But he availed himself of the occasion to make an appeal to Charles XII. for assistance on the strength of the treaty concluded between their grandfathers. At the same time he assured Augustus, who had sent an envoy to him, of the continuance of his loyal friendship.

In the meantime war had gone on without interruption. The Austrians were for the present reduced to preparing their forces for a future campaign. The Hungarians, being left masters of the operations, had three objects in view,

<sup>1</sup> January 24, 1704.

viz. to carry the revolution across the Danube and to get this remaining part of the country into their power, to continue the raids into the neighbouring hereditary provinces, and, thirdly, to reduce the forts still held by the Imperials. For these purposes Bercsenyi sent Karolyi across the Danube with a force of 5000 men, and organized flying detachments with headquarters at Stomfa, Szakolcza, and Szent György under Bokros and Ordody, while the operations before the forts, owing to the want of siege material, were confined to investment and their result confided to time.

Everything was prepared in the south, and the Magyar squires there were as ready to welcome the kurucz liberators as their brethren in the north and east had been. Ladislas Sandor, an influential member of the local gentry, had constituted himself their leader, and together with John Bezereidy ridden into Bercsenyi's camp to invite him into their country. But as there were no bridges and the kurucz troops had no boats, they had to wait until the Danube was frozen. When Karolyi came on the 11th of January the events of last summer and autumn repeated themselves, and all that he had to do was to receive the deputations who came from all sides, on foot and on horseback, with banners flying, to offer their allegiance. The best names of that part of the country—Cziraky, Viczay, Szapary, Chernel, Sigray, Pazmandy—were amongst the newcomers; amongst them also Daniel Ester-

hazy, up till now a royal colonel, forthwith to be made general. In a short time Karolyi's forces had quintupled in numbers, and there being no enemy in sight anywhere, he dispersed his regiment in all directions to establish the new regime, and to receive on their way the surrender of towns and forts. In a few weeks the Imperial power in the south was reduced to the strongholds of Buda, Győr, Esztergom, Szigetvar, Soprony, and two or three smaller places.

Even Soprony might have been taken had Ocskay done his duty and profited by the first consternation. Karolyi had sent him with about 500 riders before this important town to summon it to surrender. Its citizens were all Germans and faithfully devoted to the reigning house. But they were frightened, and there was no garrison of regular soldiers within their walls. They began to parley with Ocskay, and invited him to honour their town with his visit. He came and spent three days rioting in the stews. Seeing whom they had to deal with, the citizens redeemed their vineyards and mills outside the town by taking letters of protection from Ocskay at 4 florins a piece, sent a deputation to Karolyi to negotiate for their surrender, and another to Vienna for a military garrison. By the time the first deputation returned from Karolyi with his demand of a contribution of 50,000 florins, Colonel Blomberg had arrived with 400 Imperial regulars, and the lost opportunity could

never be recovered in spite of subsequent sieges and bombardments.

If Karolyi had been quick to seize the country, he failed to establish a firm hold over it. The officers he had brought with him, and to whose advice he listened, were mostly survivors of Tököli's campaigns, whose ruling ideas were to avoid decisive encounters, to set Austrian pitfalls everywhere, and to roam over the country and take booty. Their counsels regulated his conduct, and instead of marching with his superior numbers on the Austrian General, who was organizing his small forces on the banks of the Leitha, he established himself in Esterhazy's famous castle, Kis-Marton, and sent looting expeditions into the adjacent country. He was not a disciplinarian, nor was he above taking care of his worldly interests while fighting his country's battles.<sup>1</sup> Small wonder that his troops did not behave much better on friendly than on hostile territory. Their excesses and the favour shown to them soon bred estrangement and mutual distrust between Karolyi and the people of the Trans-Danubian counties, the consequences of which made themselves felt when Heister began his campaign and turned the tables on the kurucz general.

Another mistake was committed with regard to the Servians. While Karolyi was still in Papa

<sup>1</sup> After the looting of Lackenbach and Keresztur, Mathias Gayer, one of his lieutenants, sent him 16 lead dishes, 13 lead plates, 200 pints of butter, 300 eggs, and a barrel with fruit.



receiving the homages of the country for Rakoczi, he had also sent letters patent to the Servian population exhorting them not to be hostile to the Magyar cause, and offering his protection for their friendly promises. On the banks of the Drave and the Lower Danube his words had been well received, and many Servians had accepted his letters of protection, and even promised their active assistance. But in the meanwhile Rakoczi had sent Colonels Deak and Emerich Ilosvay with 5000 men against the Servian levies, who, under Generals Kreutz and Monasterli, had marched to Schlick's assistance, but had turned back when they heard of the battle of Zolyom, and were now advancing again on Duna Földvár. The Hungarians routed the enemy utterly, took Kreutz, together with 200 Germans as prisoners, and then pursued the rest into their counties, where they burned their villages, put the population to the sword, not sparing women and children, in revenge for what the Servians had done the previous year in the county of Bihar. But on that day, as Karolyi remarks in his *Autobiography*, Servian faith in the Magyars was finally lost. And John Hellepront, a good kurucz, who had himself raised a regiment, wrote to Karolyi that this was not the way to make the Magyar cause prosper, and that he had better send another army to keep this one in order.

In the North Tokaj had surrendered on New



Year's Day. Shortly afterwards Kövar followed its commander, Count Michael Teleky, soon to become one of Rakoczi's most zealous partisans in Transylvania. On the 28th Murany, once Wesselenyi's stronghold, capitulated. But far more important and gratifying were the surrenders of Munkacs and Unghvar, Rakoczi's and Bercsenyi's family castles. The former, then an almost impregnable stronghold on an isolated rock, was surrendered by Count Auersperg on February 16, the latter by Captain Schwetlick ten days later. New men, who were soon to rise to importance, came with those places to the kurucz cause, such as George Ottlyk, Rakoczi's Court-Marshal; George Rathy, his Private Secretary; George Horvath, Bercsenyi's Court-Marshal, later head of the Commissariat; and John Szentivanyi, Colonel and Aide-de-Camp to Bercsenyi.

Prince Eugen spent a whole month in Pozsony, labouring hard to put the Emperor's affairs into some shape. But there was nothing there which seemed defensible but the sound of his great name. Of troops, he found the remnants of Schlick's small corps, and all he could do with them was to protect the approaches to Vienna on the right bank of the Danube. His views on the situation were clear and decided, and he frankly told the Emperor that never in its history had his house been in greater danger, that everything was hanging on a thread, and unless energetic measures were not only re-

solved upon but carried out, Hungary and even more would be lost. But the mills of the Austrian administration ground slowly, and reinforcements and money were forthcoming with difficulty.

The Emperor's army in 1703 consisted of thirty-eight regiments of infantry and as many of cavalry, besides the artillery, which in those days formed a guild rather than a military corps, and did not figure in the *ordres de bataille*. On paper those seventy-six regiments represented a force of 135,000 men, but none of them was complete, and in reality there were but 76,359 men in the field. The greater part of them—twenty-two regiments of infantry and sixteen of cavalry—about 34,000 men stood in Italy, where the Emperor carried on the war alone. Nine regiments of infantry and sixteen of cavalry—about 28,000 men—were in Germany, on the Upper Rhine, and on the Austro-Bavarian frontiers. The rest—seven regiments infantry and six cavalry—were in Hungary and Transylvania. Lewis XIV. had about 229,000 troops in the field, including those of his Spanish and Bavarian allies. To make up for the disparity, the Emperor had to count on England, Holland, and the German Empire.

Including the troops they had hired from different German princes, the two maritime powers had a force of about 80,000 infantry and 20,000 cavalry in the Netherlands. This army was commanded by the Duke of Marlborough, and, chiefly owing to

the fears and jealousies of the States-General, not easily available for operations far removed from the Dutch frontier. The military organization of the German Empire corresponded to the shadowy nature of its own existence. It still was based on its divisions into ten circles, established by Maximilian I. about 200 years ago. Each circle had to furnish its own contingent, according to the number of troops voted by the diet. The minimum number had been established in 1681 at 40,000 men, and the diet of 1702 had voted that it should be trebled. But as the circles were not only never united in purpose, but there were also constant dissensions within their own limits, the full number was never put into the field, and the troops levied were of very different value. The total number of these contingents amounted in 1703 to about 28,000 men.

The real fighting power of the German race was not represented in the Empire's army, but in the troops of the different territorial sovereigns. The Elector of Bavaria had increased his army in 1702 from 15,000 to 27,000 men, and in the following year he raised 13,000 troops more. These were fighting against the Emperor. The Elector of Saxony had an army of nearly 40,000 men, but they were none too many, even with his Russian allies, against Charles XII.'s as yet invincible power. He had furnished to the Emperor an auxiliary force of about 5200 men. So had the King of Prussia, whose army numbered likewise about 40,000 men.

Besides, the Emperor had about 3500 Danish troops in his pay, some of whom were now sent to Hungary.

Roughly speaking, the great alliance had about 210,000 troops in the field against Lewis XIV.'s 229,000, but how different the unity of command and disposition on the two sides.

The Emperor's financial means stood in an even worse proportion to his wide-reaching aims than his military power. In fact, if he could have found more money he could have easily put more soldiers into the field. But there was not money enough in the Treasury to pay those who were there already, and the condition they were left in was truly pitiable. After having taken possession of his office in Vienna, Prince Eugen laid a memorial before the Emperor on the state of his affairs, especially of his troops. The regiments in Italy were the flower of the Imperial army, being those who had fought and conquered before in the long wars against the Turks, on the Rhine and in the Netherlands. They had been 54,000 in number when the war began. For three years they had been fighting, receiving neither reinforcement, provisions, nor pay in time. Now they had shrunk to half of their original number; the cavalry being mostly without horses, the infantry without boots, the officers without money, and the Emperor in debt for his Italian army for over 4 million florins.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eugen to Emperor Leopold, Vienna, August 12, 1704.

But if the condition in Italy was bad, it was still worse in Hungary.<sup>1</sup>

The expenses of the war for 1703 had been estimated by the Imperial Board of Treasury at 28 million florins, the possible revenues at 58 million, but the Board had added that of the latter sum only 28 million were likely to flow in.<sup>2</sup> In fact, the revenues never reached, and the expenses always exceeded, the estimates. Every payment was in arrear, and the administration lived from hand to mouth. In the consternation produced by the battle of Zolyom the proposition had been made to take money wherever it could be found, and to confiscate all deposits—funds belonging to orphans, charities, etc.—against future restitution. The Emperor did not sanction this extreme measure, and ordered instead an anticipation of next year's taxes. The confiscation of all silver in churches was likewise decreed, and recourse taken to loans from some of the great nobles. The effect of these measures was small, and the repartitioned assessments of

<sup>1</sup> "The men die for want of medicine owing to the unhealthy and unaccustomed climate, and to bad quarters where sick and healthy are huddled together on the naked floor without clothing," report of the Hofkammer to the Emperor, March 22, 1704.

"I pity all the poor devils who are sent to Hungary to die there without any profit," Thiel to Prince Eugen, November 12, 1704.

It is, however, but fair to remember that similar conditions prevailed also elsewhere. Marshal Tesse's letters to Louis XIV. from his camp before Gibraltar, give a glaring picture of the utter inadequacy of the means with which the siege of that fortress was undertaken and the incompetency of the Spanish administration.

<sup>2</sup> The most problematic items figured in these estimates; thus a loan of 2 million to be hoped for from Czar Peter, 1 million for the sale of Rakoczi's confiscated estates, another million from England, who had promised a subsidy of £50,000 for Italy on condition that Holland would contribute the same, 15 million for lands confiscated in Bohemia long ago, etc.

the different countries remained the most reliable, and important sources of revenue. But of their estimated total of 12 million, four fell on Hungary, and under existing conditions were absolutely fictitious.

Stirred by Eugen's warnings and the imminent peril, hemmed in by other exigencies and the limitations of their resources, the Imperial Administration exerted themselves as well as they could. Recruits were enrolled. Danish regiments ordered to Moravia, a loan was obtained from Count Czernin, and slowly a new army corps formed, which, toward the end of the winter, numbered about 7000 men on foot, and 5000 mounted, and which was placed in intervals along the Hungarian frontiers from Silesia in the north, to Hainburg and Soprony in the south. Its command was given to Count Siegbert Heister, mainly for the reason that he happened to be available. A worse selection could hardly have been made. Heister was an old soldier who had then served in the Imperial army thirty-nine years, and held an honourable record for bravery and energy. As Colonel he had taken part in the defence of Vienna in 1683, and as Lieutenant-General had commanded the right wing of the army in the battle of Zenta. But military talents of the higher order he had none, statesmanlike abilities such as his new command required still less. Obstinate, brutal, and cruel, he saw in the extermination of the Hungarian

rebels a congenial task, but through his ill-conceived operations, boundless exactions, and inability to co-operate with others, became almost as great a scourge to his own soldiers as to the unfortunate country on which he was to descend. Already, when in the past summer he had been entrusted with the defence of the Tyrol against the Elector's invasion, Prince Eugen had written that he did not like the appointment, and a few months later the Emperor had been obliged to recall him as much for his military shortcomings, as because of the complaints of the Tyrolese against him. But he enjoyed the favour of Mansfeld and Buccellini, and he happened to be on the spot when, after Schlick's failure, a new general was wanted. Before accepting the command, Heister insisted on being made Field-Marshal, on receiving 600 florins per month table-money, and the promise of a rich estate in Hungary after the subjugation of the rebels.

A far better appointment had been made a few days before. The office of Banus of Croatia had become vacant through the death of Count Batthány, and on Prince Eugen's recommendation was given to Count John Palffy, who, though fifteen years younger than Heister, had already a distinguished military career behind him, and who, like his older brother Nicholas, was one of the few Hungarians whom the Court of Vienna fully trusted. The position of those labancz nobles who, though faithfully devoted to the reigning dynasty, yet loved



their country, was indeed a difficult one. In Vienna they were distrusted by their own countrymen, looked upon at best as servile souls who sold the birthright of a free nation for titles and donations. Nobody steered better between the cliffs of these dangerous straits than the two brothers Palffy. It was the destiny of the younger to play the most important part in the final act of the great drama, and by the services then rendered alike to king and nation, to reconcile the duties he owed to both. But at present he had to begin his career by organizing a counter rising in Croatia, and by letting loose against his countrymen the bands he was able to levy by the promises of free plunder, and whom he himself called more devilish than Tartars.

The Austrian Ministers could not hope to crush Rakoczi with Heister's 12,000 soldiers and Palffy's undisciplined levies. The leading idea embodied in the instructions which the former received from the Board of War was that he should protect the Austrian territory, and chiefly Vienna, from further raids; that for this purpose he should in co-operation with Palffy drive the kurucz troops back to the left banks of the Danube, and that for the rest he should frame his operations with regard to the results of the pending peace negotiations. It took Heister two months to set his troops in motion,<sup>1</sup> but when he opened his campaign, he

<sup>1</sup> In fact he only started after Karolyi had again appeared before Vienna and burned the Emperor's castle at Ebersdorf.

did so on his own plan of extinguishing the rebellion by fire and sword.

Reluctantly the Emperor had accepted the mediation of his English and Dutch allies, but he would not hear of their or any foreign power's guarantee for the arrangements to be concluded with his Hungarian subjects. The allies themselves were fully aware of the delicacy of the demand and the difficulty of bringing it to any tangible issue. But they had offered, or rather obtruded, their mediation for their own aims and not for those of the Hungarians or the Emperor's, and they did not intend to let it be foiled because of a word. Stepney, who on his return from leave had stopped at The Hague, discussed the subject with the Grand Pensioner Heinsius, and "pointed to its two inherent impossibilities, viz. to give to the Hungarians an effective security and not to wound" the Emperor's self-love and dignity. Heinsius answered that the point had already been raised by Bruyninx, but that there was nothing to do but to go on, that the commissioners should act as circumstances would permit, and as far as might be agreeable to both sides. Many diplomatic negotiations before and since have been carried on on the same lines.

At Vienna the Emperor's innermost council—Harrach, Prince Eugen, Mansfeld, Kaunitz, and Buccellini—held two conferences at which Bruyninx and Whitworth assisted and the questions of the guarantee, of how to approach Rakoczi, and of an

armistice were discussed. For the Austrians the latter was the most urgent need of the hour, and to obtain it they would have willingly made a show of concession on the other points. They all agreed that King Joseph's guarantee was the only one compatible with the Emperor's interests and dignity, and that it ought to be sufficient; but rather than lose a kingdom for the sake of a word, some expedient like the seconding or enforcing of his royal word by the allies might be admitted. As for Rakoczi, it would be best not to enter as yet into correspondence with him; but if it could not be avoided, the mediators as foreigners might address him by his princely title. Eugen remarked that if peace was made the Emperor would without doubt confirm the same, and Kaunitz<sup>1</sup> said that it might have saved a lot of trouble if it had been acknowledged before.

It remained to be seen whether Rakoczi would accept the mediation of the Emperor's allies. When in his instructions to Bercsenyi he had insisted on a foreign guarantee he had pointed to Sweden, Poland, Prussia, and Venice as the powers he would prefer for the purpose. But as to his ultimate intentions the Court in Vienna and the mediators felt as much in the dark as to the nature and conditions of the required guarantee. In order to

<sup>1</sup> Dominik Andrek Kaunitz (born 1655) concluded the alliance with Sobieski in 1683, and was then made count. He concluded also the Peace of Ryswyck 1697, and became one of the most influential members of Leopold I.'s council during the last years of the reign. He was a man of conciliatory views.

get some light on these points and a tangible ground for further negotiations, the Imperial Ministers suggested that Bruyninx should pay a confidential visit to Bercsenyi. The hope to renew with better success the former attempts to win over the general entered without a doubt into this step, for Bruyninx was charged with the most friendly messages from King Joseph, and Prince Eugen told him not to spare his offers of titles, money, or lands if he saw an opening.

Bruyninx set out on his journey with rather sanguine expectations. On the 6th of March he wrote to Whitworth from Pozsony that Stepney, who was then expected in Vienna, should make haste to join him, as there was honour to be won. But four days later, after having seen the Hungarian general, he wrote again that Stepney might just as well wait for his return in Vienna, as for the present there was nothing to be done. He had met with a most courteous, or as he himself termed it, a magnificent reception, but he had advanced no further with Bercsenyi than the Palatine's emissaries before him. Inaccessible to any offers of personal advantages, firmly rooted in his convictions, and conscious of his power, the Hungarian leader spoke freely on the situation, and gave to the Dutch diplomatist a lecture on Hungary's constitutional rights and the long list of her grievances. He insisted that the Hungarians had as good a right to struggle for their national freedom and to seek alliances for the purpose as

the Dutch had had against Philip II., and that the present movement was not sedition or rebellion, but an uprising of the whole nation, who had no faith in Austrian promises, and would not lay their arms down without an international guarantee. When asked about the nature of this demand, he replied that it was for those who desired an accommodation to make propositions, and for the other side to examine them. He concluded by referring Bruyninx to the impending meeting at Gyöngyös, and invited him to address his further overtures to Rakoczi in befitting form.

Bruyninx returned without having formed an opinion on the final aims of the Hungarian leaders. In all the towns and villages which he had passed on his way to and from Sempst the people had decorated their houses with white flags and, in their absence, with pocket-handkerchiefs. They seemed to him well disposed for peace. The Protestants had shown to him marked sympathy, as they expected better results for their cause from English and Dutch mediation than from an alliance with France and Bavaria. But the decision rested with the leaders, and about their ultimate aims Bercsenyi had told him nothing. What he had heard was merely rumour. Some thought that King Joseph might be re-elected, others that a new king, perhaps Rakoczi himself, would be chosen.

Immediately after his interview with Bruyninx, Bercsenyi started for Gyöngyös, where Rakoczi

arrived about the 20th of March. Archbishop Szechenyi was already there, so were bishops Thelekessy, Pyber, and a large number of nobles and deputations from counties, also the envoys of France, Bavaria, Poland, and Turkey, the two former exerting themselves to confirm the Hungarians in their disposition for war.

The conference ended on the 28th without any result. Rakoczi would not accept the mediation or guarantee of King Joseph, but insisted on his original demand for a formal international security. He repeated that he would prefer that of Sweden and Poland, but declared himself willing to accept the mediation of England and Holland, provided their plenipotentiaries received new letters in proper form.

In reality there was very little sincerity in these negotiations on either side.<sup>1</sup> The Austrian Court

<sup>1</sup> The starting-point of both sides was already separated by a wide gulf, which hardly permitted them ever to come together. Again and again Rakoczi and Bercsenyi had insisted that they and their adherents were not rebels, but the representatives of a free people fighting for their rights, and wanting to secure them by an international agreement. In the eyes of the Austrians the Hungarians were nothing but rebels, to be treated with leniency or rigour as circumstances might require, but whose pretensions could not be acknowledged without the destruction of the fundamental order of things. The Austrian point of view is clearly expressed in a letter of Emperor Leopold to Count Wratislaw (then in London) of April 16, 1704. "Through the assistance of the Almighty, things have begun to change in Hungary, but the ministers of the sea Powers have gone a little too far, viz. that everything they have asked ought to be granted and conceded to the rebels. I am inclined to believe that this comes only from too great a zeal and desire to see the fire extinguished; but it is impossible that I should consent to propositions which inspire everybody who hears them with horror and aversion, as that they, the rebels, are to be regarded in the treaty as a free people, and that a new royal election ought to take place without regard to the one which was held a few years ago with such solemnity. In this entirely inadmissible way the prerogative and quality of hereditary succession, which has been established in the kingdom for so long a time, would be destroyed. I tell you

had consented to mediation, which it hated, in the hope that either a direct accommodation, or the success of its arms would spare the necessity of its employment. The Hungarian leaders had declared themselves as not averse to an honourable agreement, but had refused to specify their terms, and from the outset insisted on a condition which was as humiliating to the Emperor as practically valueless to themselves. Nothing characterizes better the temper prevailing on both sides than a chance remark of Stepney in April. In the powers which he had originally received from London for his mediation, Rakoczi and his party had been styled the Emperor's subjects, now in arms against him. Stepney, having feared that in this form they might not be acceptable to the kurucz chiefs, had received a second commission, in which they were called patriots and confederates. The question arose whether these terms would not be offensive to the Imperialists, and whether they should not again be modified. But he remarked that either

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all this in order that the sea Powers should not receive the impression that I do not wish to arrive at a compromise or agreement, which on the contrary I have always desired, if only it will be founded in equity and not in the destruction of royal authority."

And on October 4, 1704: "On my part I would fain have gotten out of the Hungarian affair long ago, but these turbulent people demand such insolent and audacious things, have also such ways and manners to promote their ends, that it is impossible blindly to assent to them. About these circumstances I charge you accurately to inform Marlborough, and to assure him that I will willingly do all which is possible to facilitate this work, but Stepney has always shown too much passion in the matter. While I really cannot say what cause he has had, I can say that at certain times and occasions he has gone and been carried so far in his expostulations, that it almost seemed as if he would instigate the rebels instead of appeasing them."

—*Hof- und Staatsarchiv Vienna: Weissungen nach England.*

the first or the second commission would do; for should Heister, who had just finished the first campaign, continue to be successful, the original powers will be good enough for the Hungarians, whereas if the Emperor's troops met with a check, his Ministers will have to be satisfied with the second letters.

The question of the foreign guarantee was not the only one on which there was a wide gulf between the two contending sides. Again and again it had been stated to Szechenyi at Gyöngyös that the Parliament of Pozsony, which had established hereditary succession to the crown, was not a free and legal one, that its resolutions were invalid, and that King Joseph had no right to the throne unless he was legally re-elected. Although Rakoczi had refused to commit himself to any binding terms, Szechenyi had been able to send XXV. Articles to Vienna, which he had gathered in his conversations, as representing the consensus of the leaders, and on which he thought that peace might be concluded. They contained, besides the Anglo-Dutch mediation and the guarantee of Sweden and Poland, the annulment of the sentence against Rakoczi, the conferring of all offices and dignities in the kingdom on Hungarians, the residence of the King in the country, the restoration of the right of election to the throne and of armed resistance, and some vague hints at arrangements necessary to satisfy the Transylvanians.



There was evidently no compromise possible on these latter points. The deliverance of Hungary from the Turks, the reconquest of Transylvania, and the establishment of hereditary succession were the real great achievements of Leopold's reign, and nothing but utter defeat could make him give them up.

## CHAPTER IV

Heister's campaigns and barren victories—Forgach's mission and defection—Rakocz's election in Transylvania—The battle of Höchstadt (Blenheim) and its effect on Hungary—Armistice and first formal conference at Selmecz—Spring to autumn 1704.

THE spring campaign of 1704 opened disastrously for the kurucz cause. The operations were begun by Palffy, who, with his Croatian levies, had crossed the river Drava on March 9, and in a few days reconquered the country between that river and the Mur from the kurucz forces. In the meanwhile Hannibal Heister, the Marshal's brother, and General Rabatta were pressing, with two frontier regiments and some Styrian levies, to the east, and Colonel Herberstein marching with Servian levies from Slavonia north. The Marshal himself, with about 5000 regular troops, set out from Ebenfurth, on the Austrian frontier, to attack Karolyi's camp in Kis-Marton. Numerically the latter's troops were superior to all of his adversaries; in quality they were more than a match for any but the Field-Marshal's regulars. But they were scattered over a wide country and not available for a well-devised

tactical blow. Some were lying before the fortresses of Buda, Esztergom, and Győr, others dislocated from Kittsee in the north to the Mur and Drava in the south. Karolyi himself was away on a raid before Vienna on the very day when Heister attacked him. It is true that he burned the Emperor's castle at Ebersdorf and caused a repetition of the panic of last Christmas within the walls of the Imperial city, but when he returned towards his headquarters he found that his lieutenants Loczy and Benkö had been routed by Heister, that their retreat had degenerated into a flight, and that his army was disbanding, the local levies returning to their homes, and his own Tibiscians hastening as fast as their horses could carry them towards their native region in the east. He had ridden with them in their hurried flight from Neszider to Magyar Ovar, from Leben Szent Miklos to Papa, where he succeeded in bringing them to a temporary stop, and where he held a review over what remained. They were only his own original troops with whom he had come in January. All the Trans-Danubians who had so eagerly thronged round him a few months before had disappeared, nobody knew whither. Loud were the denunciations of treason, great the hurry to bring the captured booty into safety across the Tibiscus. There was no stopping the disheartened bands, and in spite of Rakoczi's urgent encouragements and admonitions, in spite of his own mortification,

Karolyi saw no other way of saving his remaining troops than to continue their retreat and lead them himself back across the Danube.

Heister had pursued Karolyi as far as Győr. When a few days later he appeared before Papa, the fort opened its doors as it had done to Karolyi three months before. Giving its command again to Antal Esterhazy, the Field-Marshal turned south towards Szekes Fehervar, where he encountered and beat a kurucz force of about 5000 under Daniel Esterhazy, and then took the town. Herberstein had, with his Servians, already reconquered Pecs. The success seemed complete. Two days after his entrance into Szekes Fehervar, Heister sent his son to Vienna to bring the news of his victory, and to announce the pacification of the whole region on the right bank of the Danube.

But Heister's conquests were even more hollow than those of Karolyi. Had he known how to deal with the people it might have been different. They had so far made no pleasant experiences by their adherence to the kurucz cause. Karolyi had distrusted them, his troops had ransacked them. The want of understanding and cohesion between liberators and liberated had been a main cause of Heister's easy success. But the man who had come to re-establish the reign of order and legality had the idea that this could be done by terror alone. Heister hated Hungarians, he found fault with the Emperor's patent of amnesty because it

did not order a general disarmament, and he openly declared his opinion that the Hungarians ought to be ruled by fear and not with mildness. He slighted and bullied nobles and men of influence, he thwarted and offended Archbishop Szechenyi, whose endeavours for the cause of peace were in his eyes rank treason. The soldiers' actions took their colouring from the Marshal's opinions. The excesses committed by the kurucz troops when they had taken Pecs were bad enough, but when Herberstein retook it his Servians behaved against the inhabitants in a way which made the Austrian Colonel, Count Huyn, exclaim that during his fifty years of military service against Turks and rebels he had never seen such devilries. And Palfy's Croatians were, if possible, worse, sparing neither women nor children, committing unspeakable cruelties. It was soon to become clear, if not to Heister, then to his masters in Vienna, that a pacification effected by such means could only last as long as the terror was present.

Hitherto Rakoczi had taken no active share in the open campaign. After the surrender of Tokaj he had established his Court for the winter in Miskolcz, from where he could conveniently hold the central threads of all affairs in his hands, and at the same time keep the German garrisons of Kassa, Szendrő, and Eger in check. At the beginning of March he had begun to invest the latter place, and thither he returned after the conference of

Gyöngyös. Learning of Karolyi's disaster, he now resolved to take the field in person, to cross the Danube, and by his own appearance in that region to inspire his scattered partisans with courage for a new rising. But Heister's operations, Bercsenyi's letters, and most of all the temper of his troops, made him change his plans.

When still in Gyöngyös Rakoczi was surprised by the arrival of Count Simon Forgach, the Imperial General who had commanded the labancz troops at Zolyom. A courtier and a soldier, a wit and an author, Forgach seemed neither by his antecedents nor by his predilections destined to become a kurucz. He came of an old and powerful family who had always stood well at Court; his father had been "*Judex Curiae*,"<sup>1</sup> his grandfather Palatine, he himself had been brought up at Court, and had been a playmate of the heir to the crown. At the age of eighteen he had entered the Imperial army, and rapidly advanced to the grade of lieutenant-colonel. At the outbreak of the Spanish War he had raised a regiment of his own, and had been made a brigadier-general. His labancz feelings, which he accentuated even by his outward appearance, seemed proof against all temptation; and so fully was he trusted in Vienna that, at the outbreak of the Hungarian troubles, he was recalled from the Empire and employed against

<sup>1</sup> The office of *Judex Curiae* was the highest judicial dignity in Hungary. It can be compared with the office of Lord Chancellor and of Lord Chief Justice in England.

his kurucz countrymen. He even was one of the serious candidates for the office of Banus of Croatia, and no doubt felt hurt when, on Prince Eugen's recommendation, it was given, not to him, but to Pálffy. But he did not desert the Imperial cause then, and even a month later had asked his cousin Bercsenyi for the restitution of the decree bearing his nomination as Imperial General, which had fallen into kurucz hands at Solyom. Now he suddenly rode out from a banquet in Vienna into the nearest kurucz camp, and then continued his journey until he found Rakoczi, to whom he offered his allegiance. When he appeared in Gyöngyös in German uniform, clean shaved, he looked much more like an envoy from Court than a fellow-kurucz, and rumours arose at once that he had come on a mission. But he denied them, and told Rakoczi that he had found himself suspected in Vienna, his servants had been arrested, he feared a similar fate for himself, and that anyhow he loathed Germans and their rule to the bottom of his soul, and had come to join the cause of his countrymen.

The last part of his story was true, but his denials were not. Forgach had to flee from no suspicion or persecution, and the current opinion in both camps that he had come with the consent of the Court, and was the bearer of a message, was right.<sup>1</sup> Many years afterwards, in their dismal exile

<sup>1</sup> "With regard to my cousin Forgach, I hear they have neither pursued nor persecuted him. The arrest of his servants is only a pretext. They expect him back; they have taken nothing of his belongings, his brother

of Rodosto, he confessed to Rakoczi that he had indeed received a mission from King Joseph, who was anxious to turn the kurucz leaders from their purpose of proceeding to a new election, and to persuade them to ask his father to cede the Hungarian crown to him in his lifetime. On the Prince's question why he had withheld a message which he and the nation would have been well disposed to entertain, and which might have materially altered the course of events, Forgach answered that that was just what he feared, and that his knowledge and hatred of Austrians was such that he wanted no compromise, but the end of their rule.

Whether Forgach's delivery of his message would really have changed the course of Hungarian history may well be doubted. If Rakoczi and Bercsenyi had been inclined to see in Joseph's personality the solution of the crisis, opportunities for the consideration of such a project had not been wanting. That the heir to the crown was dissatisfied with the way in which Hungarian affairs had been managed was an open secret, and the Prussian Court had already directed Rakoczi's attention through his envoys Raday and Okolicsanyi to the advisability of making use of those sentiments, and of obtaining

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Adam sold them all. The truth is, they keep his servants in Heister's camp, and give them their pay in Forgach's name. What is likewise true is that the King wished Kery to come to us, he himself told it to my wife, but he did not want to do it without the knowledge of the Court. Then the King turned to Forgach, who was willing. . . . The object of his mission is to win over the Hungarians to the King."—Bercsenyi to Rakoczi, April 28, 1704.



Joseph's support for their cause. Nor does it seem impossible that such a solution might have been made acceptable to the old Emperor. He himself had offered his son's mediation to the nation, and in his official reply to the XXV. Articles which the Archbishop had sent from Gyöngyös, Count Kaunitz expressly stated that Emperor Leopold intended to leave the management of Hungarian affairs henceforth to his son. It seems also most unlikely that the Archbishop, in his many conversations with the Hungarian leaders, should not have hinted at the possibility of such a solution. But Rakoczi had hitherto turned a deaf ear to all these propositions and suggestions, and invariably insisted on a guarantee from foreign powers. When Forgach arrived in his camp, the battle of Blenheim had not been fought, and the power of Lewis XIV. was yet unscarred. It does not seem likely that any message from King Joseph would then have altered his dispositions, unless it had been the proposition to put himself at the head of the kurucz movement against his own father. There is, however, not the slightest indication that he intended to go so far, and to revive against his father the part which Archduke Mathias had played against his brother Rodolphe a hundred years before.

The guilt of Forgach is not lessened by these considerations. He accepted an errand of conciliation, he acted as an agent of strife. He not

only burnt the bridges for his own return, which was his own concern, but he contributed to embitter the King's feelings against the nation from whose leaders he did not even receive an answer to the expression of his friendly feelings. Forgach's only excuse lies in the fact that he was actuated by no self-seeking motives. He had nothing to gain from Rakoczi; he possessed rank, honour, and wealth, and held them securely under the Austrian power. He did what he did from love of his nation, and still more from hatred of Austrians. But that a man like he, brought up at Court, grown to manhood in the Imperial army, enjoying the favour of the heir to the crown, and living in the intimacy of power and influence, should have gone away from Vienna with such an undying hatred of all that he had experienced, throws a strange light on the sentiments prevalent there for Hungary and Hungarians. He told Rakoczi that his hair stood on end at the remembrance of the speeches of the Austrian Ministers, which he had heard not once or twice, but continually, about the way Hungarians ought to be dealt with. Forgach was not an easy person to get on with; of measureless pride and self-love, he was apt to take offence, and was continually quarrelling with his kurucz brother-generals, Karolyi, Pekry, and, most of all, with his cousin Bercsenyi. On a nature like his the effect of the many slighting and odious remarks against his nation was the more deep

and lasting as he had to dissemble his resentment, and, whatever we may discount from his tales on account of personal colouring, their tenor coincides but too well with what we know of the sentiments of Austrian Ministers in Leopold's reign, from Hoher in the sixties to Kollonics and Buccelini in the nineties of the seventeenth century.

Rakoczi appointed Forgach forthwith General in the kurucz army, and entrusted him with the command of the siege of Eger. About three weeks later the new General succeeded in concluding with the Imperial Commander a capitulation by which the fort was to be surrendered after eight months if no succour arrived in the meantime.

Thinking that he had finished with the south, Heister turned now north against Bercsenyi. By the middle of April he was in Komarom, where the Banus was to join him, and from whence the operations were to begin. Their first object was to drive the kurucz out of the islands of Csalloköz (Schütt), formed by the branches of the Danube, and to relieve the besieged fortresses of Ujvar and Nyitra. At the same time General Ritschan, who had been ordered from Pozsony to take command of the troops collected on the Moravian frontier, was to march on Bercsenyi from the north, while Colonels Viard and Virmont, with the Danish General Tramp, were to descend from Pozsony by water and land on the islands. The plan

might have been well conceived if there had been troops enough to carry it out, and if Heister's generals could have moved with exactness. Palfy arrived in Komarom, but with hardly any troops. His Croats had, during their first campaigns, filled their bags and carts with plunder, and were as anxious to carry it home as ever Karolyi's Tibiscians had been. Ritschan's troops were slow to assemble, and although he reinforced the fort of Trencsenyi and retook the town, he only moved south after Heister had gone, and then ran to his destruction. In the islands Pekry made a good defence. Still Heister succeeded in clearing them of the enemy, and, marching into the countries of Nyitra and Pozsony, was slowly but surely gaining ground.

The unfortunate events on the other side of the Danube had not been without effect on the morale of Bercsenyi's troops. He was resolved to make a better stand than Karolyi, but he could not hope to match Heister's trained troops in open battle with his county levies. Disheartened as they were, it was no easy task to keep them together, and he only succeeded in doing so by assuring them of speedy succour from Rakoczi. Urgently and almost daily he implored the Prince to come to the rescue, and either by crossing the Danube at Földvar, as he had intended, to force Heister to return south, or still better, by advancing to Vacz, condemn him to inaction, or threaten his rear if he advanced against

Bercsenyi.<sup>1</sup> In the meanwhile he did what he could, organizing new levies, directing operations in the Csallóköz, defending one position after the other, continually on the move—now in Tyrnau, then in Sente, on the Danube or again on the Vagh, sending his lieutenants towards Ovar to recapture it if possible, then into the White Mountains, and even Moravia, at the same time continuing the thread of the peace negotiations, and informing Rakoczi daily. Never more than in those days did Bercsenyi seem, as he was in reality, the soul of everything.

Rakoczi was on his way to the Danube when

<sup>1</sup> "If you cannot cross the Danube, I do not know how we shall be able to maintain ourselves. . . . If you are strong enough to cross the Danube, you may give a turn to things, if not, the enemy will do what he likes. . . . By Jove, now would be the time for Vaca."—Bercsenyi to Rakoczi, April 14.

"On my faith I will keep this country for you, if I have the wherewithal. . . . If you can cross the Danube all will be well."—April 15.

"You ought to come to Vaca, and send only 4000 men across at Földvár. It would re-establish things. . . . If we do not act strenuously we shall be crushed."—April 18.

"I will not lose my head like Karolyi. . . . In the name of Christ, I beseech you, do not leave everything to fate, but come yourself to the rescue. . . . Again you amuse yourself with a fortress. . . . You want to do a favour to your troops with the Servians, why not to me? . . . If Pálffy has any troops he may send them over towards Újvár, and bring us into such confusion that I shall not know what to do. The troops from Lova and the upper country will leave me, and I depend upon the mercy of these countess. These tail-wagging, clever, university-fed sons of bitches are to be trusted only as times go, viz. as long as they can keep themselves and their hope without death or battle, but otherwise they will not die for Hungary's, nay, not even for heaven's liberty. . . . I beseech you leave the Servians and Szeged alone, and come straight to Vaca; your name alone will keep the Germans, they will not come over, and if they do, you will free me. . . . If you do not, I may either take my leave, or soon present my respects, for I will either perish or be driven away. . . ."—April 19.

"The army and the country were in such confusion I could hardly inspire them with pluck again. I have read your letter to them as far as fit, I have comforted them, and taken my oath that you were already on the Danube, although they to-day believe you are at Vaca, for the news of your march to Szeged would have brought this country into despair. . . ."—April 26.

he received Bercsenyi's appeals. He despatched Karolyi, who, in the meanwhile had come to his succour with about 4000 troops, but did not judge it opportune to go himself and venture his imperfectly armed and inexperienced troops in a pitched battle with Heister. His intention was to cross the Danube near Solt, but when it came to its execution he found that those of his troops who came from the country between the Danube and Tibiscus were not willing to follow him, as they were afraid to put the river between themselves and their families and homesteads menaced by the Servians. After many consultations with his officers, the Prince sent Forgach with a force of likewise 4000 men across the river, and himself went into camp at Solt, from where he superintended and covered the building of the bridge he had ordered to be constructed.

Forgach's dispatch, however, sufficed to accomplish the ends desired by Bercsenyi. The fire which Heister thought he had extinguished was only smouldering, and the experience gained of Heister and his troops had intensified the hatred of the people against Austrian rule. As soon as Forgach arrived they rallied under his banners, and the events of January repeated themselves. The men who, like Emerich Bezereidy, Adam Balogh, and Francis Domokos, had been hiding in the forests of Bakony and Farkas waiting for better times, as well as those who had

accepted the amnesty and retired to their estates, flocked into his camp. And not only they, but also men who had resisted the national wave before but did so no longer. Most conspicuous amongst them was Anthony Esterhazy, the Palatine's nephew, Nigrelli's son-in-law, whom Heister had entrusted with the command of Papa, and who now opened its doors to his old friend and comrade Forgach. Within a few weeks the latter found himself at the head of an army of 25,000 men, crossed the Raab and the Mur, and, pushing his outposts to Kőszeg and Soprony, threatened the Austrian frontier and Vienna itself, just like Karolyi two months before.

Heister had retaken Nagyszombat and advanced to Szered when he received the news of these events, and with them the orders to return south for the protection of the approaches to Vienna. He marched back to Komárom, and from there to Szekes Fehervar, probably on the receipt of false news about Rakoczi having sent skirmishing parties in that direction, and perhaps in the hope of meeting the Prince himself. Otherwise it would be difficult to understand why he should have brought his tired troops so far, and to a place where no enemy stood. If his advance had been marked by cruelty and devastation, it was still worse on his retreat, when disappointment and vindictiveness added their sting to his natural severity. The town of Veszprem fared particularly badly. His soldiers

plundered, burned, and killed. Even the cathedral was looted like any private dwelling, and some of the canons were wounded. Archbishop Szechenyi complained bitterly to the Emperor about these proceedings, while Rakoczi pointed—not without some satisfaction—to the contradiction between Heister's actions and the Emperor's continued assurances of paternal feelings, and added that henceforth he would have to insist that all pledges should be signed not by the Emperor but by his ministers and generals. For the military ends of the campaign all these barbarities were absolutely worthless, and for its political object self-destroying. And while Heister was running a wild goose's chase in the south Bercsenyi dealt a crushing blow to General Ritschan in the north.

The Field-Marshal had thought that he would make short work with the Trans-Danubian rebels, and soon return to finish the campaign against Bercsenyi. With this idea he had written to Ritschan, who was coming from Skalitz with a force of about 3000 regulars and 2000 Moravian militia, to occupy the places which he (Heister) had taken, and instructed Palffy, whom he had sent to Pozsony, to effect a junction with Ritschan. But Bercsenyi had learned by some intercepted letters that the latter was coming through the mountain pass of Jabloncza, and formed the plan of trapping him there. For this purpose he sent Ocskay with some regiments north to keep a watch



on Ritschan's movements, and to inform him and Karolyi of the moment of his starting. The latter was to attack the Austrians at the southern exit, while to impede their retreat Slovak levies had been posted on the wooded heights. The plan succeeded beyond Bercsenyi's most sanguine expectations. The Austrians were not only beaten but annihilated. Of Ritschan's force only about a thousand escaped back into Moravia, the rest were killed or captured. So was he himself, and with him four field-guns, all his ammunition, his flags and standards, his war-chest, and his whole train fell into the hands of the victors. Of the prisoners a good many took service in the kurucz army. Three days later Bercsenyi held a solemn thanksgiving service in his camp at Majtheny, and Te Deums were likewise sung in the camps of Rakoczi and Forgach.

As great as the joy of the kurucz was the consternation in Vienna. The Emperor imparted the news himself to Prince Eugen,<sup>1</sup> who had left to take possession of his command in the Empire, and urged the advisability of sending some reinforcements from his or the Margrave of Baden's troops for Heister. But further evils were in store. Ten days after the battle of Szomolyan, Karolyi appeared on a new raid before the walls of Vienna, burned and pillaged the villages of

<sup>1</sup> Emperor Leopold to Prince Eugen, June 8, 1704. *Wälsche des Prinzen Eugen*, vol. vi. p. 770.

Fischamend and Schwochat and the Imperial residence in Simmering, and killed the hunting panthers kept there, which were a present from the Sultan. To add insult to injury he chose for this raid the 9th of June, the Emperor's birthday, which happened to be his last.

Gratifying as this excursion was to the feelings, as well as the pockets, of Karolyi and his riders, Bercsenyi might have put his victory to a better use. He had about 24,000 men, whose spirit was elated by their recent success. While Rakoczi's army, after the detachments he had sent away, was smaller, and while he could not rely too much on his militia, he had his household troops with him, who were real soldiers. If he and Bercsenyi had crossed the Danube and joined with Forgach, their numerical superiority over Heister ought to have enabled them either to deal him a crushing blow or to force him to evacuate the country. Bercsenyi saw this, and revolving in his mind all the possibilities of the situation, he wrote to the Prince that if he was here the business would soon be over. But Rakoczi would not trust all his forces, composed of volunteers, badly armed, officered mostly by men of their own election, in an open engagement against trained regulars. Besides, in those very days the question of the Elector's advance and their possible junction was to decide itself, and his resolutions must have been influenced by the wish to husband his power for

the occasion. Bercsenyi himself saw all sides of the problem, and his resolutions in action suffered thereby. After Szomolany he first thought of marching on Pozsony, but when Heister had returned to Komarom he was afraid to leave him in his rear, and desisted from his idea. He also thought about transferring the seat of the war entirely into Moravia, but in the end confined himself to what he had done before, viz. to hold the north-west, to reduce the fortresses therein, to send skirmishing raids across the frontier, and thereby exercise an indirect pressure on the Austrian Field-Marshal.

Bercsenyi had sent Karolyi across the Danube to succour Forgach. The raid on Vienna had been authorized partly as a sop to the former's wounded feelings. Through the rapidity with which he had rejoined Rakoczi, and the share he bore in Ritschan's defeat, Karolyi had retrieved his headlong flight before Heister. He was to retrieve it still more in the ensuing campaign. But he was still smarting under the reproaches incurred, and when Bercsenyi enjoined him to keep henceforth better discipline amongst his troops, he answered that the devil only could afford to be ashamed of everything, and asked whether Bercsenyi's softer ways of dealing with the people had prevented them from turning coats as soon as Heister and Palfy had appeared amongst them. Bercsenyi then empowered him to pay a visit to Austria before joining Forgach, and give a free hand to his troops there.

Whatever were Karolyi's shortcomings, he understood the temper of his troops, what he could make them do and what not. Not so Forgach, who was a theorist and a disciplinarian, and who wanted to apply what he had learned in the Austrian army to the kurucz rough-riders. He did not understand them, and he did not trust them. When Heister, who on his third campaign had up till now met no enemy save insignificant skirmishing parties, learned of the new menace to Vienna, he returned west and marched towards Győr. His troops were tired out, and Forgach might have reasonably hoped to ruin them merely by skirmishing. But he either allowed himself to be surprised, or else he miscalculated the day of Karolyi's arrival, for on June 13 he accepted a battle in the open at Koronczo, near Győr. He was beaten, and left about 3000 men, twenty-eight flags, and six guns on the field. He was not popular amongst his countrymen; a few days before the battle he had imprudently engaged in an interview with his former friend and comrade, Viard,<sup>1</sup> and after his defeat all sorts of unfounded rumours arose about his being a traitor.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Viard had made some notes of the interview, which he communicated to Stepney, and which the latter reported to Hedges on June 18, 1704, *Simonyi*, vol. I. p. 312. According to them Viard had merely told Forgach that he would have never believed his turning a rebel, and that everybody had believed that he had been entrusted with a secret negotiation by the King of the Romans. Forgach then declared himself a friend of peace, and proposed that Heister should retire his troops during the negotiations for a truce to some of the islands formed by the Danube.

<sup>2</sup> Bercsenyi, who was not overfond of his cousin, and had a keen eye for his shortcomings, protested indignantly against these accusations, and wrote to Rakoczi that by what he had learned Forgach had entirely well disposed the battle.

The victory of Kornczö remained as barren as Heister's former achievements. Forgach retired to Sarvar, where he was joined by Karolyi, and from whence they moved freely in all directions, threatening the Austrian frontiers west and re-occupying the place which Heister had left south and east. Heister himself began to realize that Hungary could not be reconquered by one army corps flying from one end of the country to the other; and partly to cover the approaches to Vienna, partly to give his troops a rest and draw reinforcements, he withdrew to Magyar Ovar on the frontier, where he remained during the next two months. The only positive result of his victory was to reaffirm his own shattered position in Vienna. The sterility of his campaigns, the complaints against his cruelties, the way he thwarted Szechenyi, and the peace negotiations in general and his overbearing demands had tired the court, and his deposition, urgently advised by Prince Eugen, seemed imminent.<sup>1</sup> But he enjoyed the powerful protection of the Jesuits, the Lord Chamberlain, and the Austrian Chancellor, and now he came to Vienna carrying his head higher than ever. He demanded full powers for all Hungarian affairs, whether for war or peace, exemption from the control of the Board of War, jurisdiction over the rebels, and the removal of Palfy. Nor did he forget his own interests, but repeated his former

<sup>1</sup> Thiel to Prince Eugen, July 21, 1704, *Feldzüge*, vol. vi. p. 776.

requests for table money and a donation. Emperor Leopold did not accede to all these pretensions, but with his usual half-heartedness left Heister in his command.

A few weeks after Forgach's defeat Karolyi was fortunate enough to surprise the Austrian General Rabatta, who had come to St. Gotthard with a force of about 2000 regulars, and to inflict on him as crushing a defeat as Ritschan had suffered at Szomolyan. The Emperor was indignant, and ordered his General to be cashiered and court-martialled.<sup>1</sup> It was a hard blow for Forgach, who had been likewise preparing for the move, and who saw himself forestalled by Karolyi, whose mode of warfare he despised, and whom he delighted to inform of all that was said about the bad discipline he kept amongst his troops. "They had a row together," wrote Bercsenyi, "but it must be conceded it was a fine action of Karolyi."

The Commander-in-Chief spent the summer months partly in sitting still and partly in sending skirmishing parties across the frontier into Austria and Moravia, and partly in pushing the siege of the beleaguered fortresses. On July 8 he received the surrender of Bajmocz, and on August 26 of the more important fortress of Nyitra. He also began preparations for the reduction of Ersek Ujvar, but the glory of its final taking was left to Rakoczi himself.

<sup>1</sup> He was, however, acquitted, and reintegrated into his rank and commission.

The Prince had spent May and June on the banks of the Danube, first at Ordas, then at Solt. Towards the end of June he broke up his camp, much to the gratification of his troops, and marched south-east right into the heart of the Servian country. After having pushed his way as far south as Titel, at the confluence of the Tibiscus and Danube, he returned north and settled down before the fort of Szeged. There he fell ill of malaria, and, his condition growing worse, ordered Forgach to his side and entrusted him with the command of the siege. There was no physician far and near, and the Prince had to send north to the mining towns to get one. Of course he was a German, and Rakoczi's faithful followers trembled to see him entrusting himself to a stranger of that nation. Already there had been two attempts to assassinate him,<sup>1</sup> and a plot was reported at that time, hatched by the Jesuits of Nágyszombat, to remove Bercsenyi by poison. But Rakoczi judged that the poison already inside his system was sure enough to kill him, and his confidence was not misplaced. But when he began to recover, the German physician, as well as Rakoczi's French surgeon, insisted on a change of air, and as the prospects of the siege were not hopeful, whereas Szechenyi had communicated new propositions for an armistice, he willingly obeyed the advice and, raising the siege, repaired

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* above, page 126. The second attempt is mentioned by Stepney in his report to Hedges, May 13, 1704, State Paper Office, Germany, 174, No. 119.

to Gyöngyös, whither he had invited the Archbishop for a second interview.

In the meanwhile an attempt of far-reaching and fateful influence had happened. On breaking up his camp before Szeged, Rakoczi received the news that he had been elected Prince of Transylvania. This news of course did not come as a surprise, as preparations for the event had been begun months ago and continued ever since. Confusion reigned in Transylvania. The Emperor's authority had ceased save in the few places occupied by Rabutin, that of Rakoczi was but imperfectly established. He had put Steven Thorockay in command of his troops, but besides him there were Orlay, Guthy, and other old Thökölians who had returned from their exile in Turkey at the outbreak of the Hungarian troubles and employed themselves to incite an uprising in Transylvania. They took advantage of Rakoczi's name, but let their troops ride rough-shod over the country. The Transylvanian nobles at Rakoczi's Court, and most of all Count Pekry, insisted that the only way to re-establish order was a new election, and urged him to call a diet for the purpose. Their representations could not fail to strike a sensible cord in his heart. For three generations his ancestors had worn the crown of Transylvania, and he saw in his own election but the restoration of his birthright. Still he was aware of the probable consequences, and hesitated. Bercsenyi, whom he consulted when the project



first took a serious shape, feared the consequence of his absenting himself from Hungary, and while not opposing the convocation of a diet, and praising the Transylvanians for their patriotic intentions, raised objections, and frankly told the Prince that if he left Hungary he might consider it as lost. But Pekry, who, after his brave behaviour in the campaign against Heister, had at his own desire been sent by Bercsenyi to Rakoczi's camp with letters of warm praise and recommendation, now basely intrigued against his kinsman, and tried to persuade the Prince that Bercsenyi was a candidate himself for the election. Rakoczi finally issued letters, not exactly calling a diet, but enjoining his partisans to respect the decisions of the one which was to assemble on its own volition at Alba Julia (Gyula Fehervar) on the 5th of July. There he was elected, but the deputies who brought him the diploma informed him that Pekry had prepared them for his non-acceptance, and that in this case Tököli would infallibly be re-elected. Thus put to the wall—he writes in his *Memoirs*—he accepted. This time he did not consult Bercsenyi, but so far paid consideration to his friend's opinion as to delay his entrance into his new principality for a long time.

That this election would prove an invincible obstacle to a peaceful accommodation was at once foreseen by Stepney and Bruyninx. The former wrote to Marlborough and to Harley<sup>1</sup> that the

<sup>1</sup> See his letters of September 7 and 10, *Simonyi*, vol. i. pp. 419-425.

Emperor could never consent to the loss of a province of such importance, nor would Rakoczi renounce his title without an equivalent. The accommodation would not have been so difficult had the surmise underlying the latter remark been true and Rakoczi disposed to consider his title to Transylvania an object for barter. The time came when equivalents were offered which for wealth and lustre nearly equalled, for security of tenure far surpassed, his elective principality, but he steadfastly refused them, and insisted on a recognition which no sovereign of Hungary could voluntarily grant. Thus Transylvania became the rock on which all peace between him and the House of Austria finally foundered, and as the question was needlessly and prematurely brought into the main issue, his connivance with and his acceptance of the election was an error in judgment.

The conference at Gyöngyös in March had failed, but the attempts to arrive at a peaceful arrangement were immediately resumed by the Imperial Court. Negotiations for the purpose were continued during the whole spring and summer, but carried on in so half-hearted and contradictory a way that from the outset they were doomed to failure. On receiving Szechenyi's report in April, the Emperor asked him to continue his efforts, to meet the Hungarian leaders again, and to obtain their consent to an armistice and then to a formal conference for the conclusion of peace. The result of these orders

was a second interview between Rakoczi and the Archbishop, which took place in the little village of Paks on the banks of the Danube about the middle of May, and which remained as fruitless as the previous one at Gyöngyös. The fact was that an armistice was not in Rakoczi's interest then, and that if he wanted one the conditions brought forward by the Austrians made its acceptance impossible.

Peace was undoubtedly the interest of Hungary and the desire of many amongst the leaders as well as amongst the rank and file in the kurucz camp. Rakoczi was fully aware of this, and had made it a principle of policy to entertain any propositions making for peace, partly to encourage the timorous and wavering amongst his followers, and also to win the favour of the Emperor's allies, and to refute the accusation spread by the enemy that he was making war in the interest of France.<sup>1</sup> But for peace no common ground had been found as yet, and even the XXV. Articles which offered the first tangible basis for a negotiation had not been presented in Vienna when he met Szechenyi at Paks. A mere armistice, however, was clearly not in the interest of Rakoczi at a time when he could still hope for a junction with the Franco-Bavarian allies, and when his acceptance would render him suspect in their eyes, leading at the same time to the disbanding of his troops, who afterwards might not be easily reassembled.

<sup>1</sup> Rakoczi's *Memoires, Histoire des Révolutions de Hongrie*, vol. ii. p. 58.

Already in January Marshal Marcin had written to Rakoczi dissuading him from any arrangement with the Emperor, and urging him to concerted action. It seems that this letter never arrived at its destination, for the emissary who carried it was caught and hanged in Vienna.<sup>1</sup> But other emissaries came and went, and while he was still in his camp at Solt, Rakoczi received the visit of M. Michel, Secretary of the French Embassy at Constantinople, who had come to bring him, with the renewed assurances of Lewis XIV.'s friendly intentions, the news that Turkey was now favourably disposed to move to his assistance. The information was false or based on a passing inclination instead of on a settled resolution, and Rakoczi himself fought rather shy of a Turkish alliance. He at once wrote to Lewis XIV. that he did not wish to see all the forces of the Sultan in Hungary, although he would accept an auxiliary corps of 12,000 men in his own pay. He added that Bavarian succour would be ever so much better, and he proposed at the same time that Lewis should order the Governor of Naples to send about 4000 troops of infantry to one of the Croatian ports. Nothing came of all these projects, but the general situation of European affairs justified Rakoczi in forming them and in rejecting an armistice.

Of the Emperor's counsellors all save his brother-

<sup>1</sup> Stepney to Harley, July 5, 1704. State Paper Office, Germany, 174, No. 179.

in-law, the Elector Palatine, and the few labancz Hungarians who had access to his ears, considered parleying and treating with the rebels as at best a necessary evil. Their opinions differed as to the exigencies of the situation, not as to its nature. The reluctance to make concessions and the desire to confine them within the narrowest limits were manifest at every new turn, and likewise entered into the instructions which Szechenyi finally received about the armistice. Although Stepney and Bruyninx had been told that it would be offered on the basis of the *uti possidetis*, the conditions actually brought to Paks contained the clause that the Austrians might freely refurnish the besieged fortresses with provisions, clothes, and money during the truce, and that the kurucz troops were in the meanwhile to retire to four specified counties in the north-east. This demand was afterwards modified, and the extent of the country to be evacuated limited to the two sides of the Danube, but the second terms were no more in harmony with the actual state of things than the first.

While the Emperor had written to the Archbishop that Heister had been instructed to second his efforts for peace, the Marshal continued his own course, and paid small attention to such orders. The Emperor's letter received a curious illustration of this from a reply Heister wrote to Szechenyi, who had complained about the difficulties he was throwing in his way. The Marshal expressed his astonish-

ment that the Archbishop should rather fear than wish for the progress of the Imperial arms, and added that he had no time to answer his letters, which contained only threats and bad advice, but that he had summoned the people of his (the Archbishop's) country to surrender or take the consequences.

On the 20th of June the Court gave its answer to the XXV. Articles. It declared that the right of the House of Austria to the Crown of Hungary established at the price of so much German blood must remain sacred and inviolate, it offered amnesty and full restitution of honours and estates to all implicated in the recent troubles, promised respect of the rights of Protestants as settled by the last diets of Pozsony and Soprony, immediate satisfaction of some desires for commerce in wine and salt, relegated all other grievances to the next diet, and contained the promise that the Emperor should either open it in person or send his son, to whom he meant to leave hereafter the management of Hungarian affairs. The answer was as could be expected, and might have offered a fair ground for treating had it not been that neither side trusted the good faith of the other, and that Rakoczi was resolved not to terminate the quarrel without obtaining for the future some other guarantees besides declarations and assurances from Austria.

Szechenyi's correspondence with Vienna on one

side and the Hungarian leaders on the other was transmitted by two special deputies, John Visa and Paul Okolicsanyi, the former titular Bishop and Provost of Kalocsa, belonging to Archbishop Szechenyi's own chapter, the latter a zealous Protestant of great influence and standing among his co-religionists, who had been arrested shortly after Rakoczi's imprisonment and only released in February at the beginning of the peace negotiations. Since then, and until October, these two gentlemen were continually on the road, carrying propositions from Vienna to Szechenyi, then to Bercsenyi and Rakoczi, and returning with the latter's replies over the same route. Negotiations proceeded slowly under these circumstances. It was toward the end of July, when he was ill in his camp before Szeged, that Rakoczi received Szechenyi's letter with the Emperor's reply and new propositions for a truce, and it was on its receipt that he invited him to a third meeting.

This time Rakoczi was more inclined to consent to an armistice. It was on his arrival at Gyöngyös, about the 20th of August, that he received the news of the overwhelming triumph of the Anglo-Austrian arms at Höchstädt (Blenheim). Cooperation with the Elector's forces had been the corner-stone of his hopes when he began the war, and now Eugen and Marlborough had made an end of it for ever.<sup>1</sup> Apart from the altered circum-

<sup>1</sup> Rakoczi's Memoires, *Histoire des Révolutions*, vol. ii. p. 58.

stances abroad, the condition of his own troops made a respite desirable. It was harvest time and vintage was at the door. Long before he had heard of Höchstädt, in fact a week before the great battle was fought, he had written to Lewis XIV. that he could not undertake anything at this season, that his troops were disbanding, that he would be obliged to accept a truce, and in fact owed his preservation merely to the enemy's ignorance of his true condition.<sup>1</sup>

Hochstädt freed the Emperor from a great and pressing danger. No such victory had been obtained over the French for wellnigh two centuries, and its glory resounded all over Europe. But it left Lewis XIV.'s power unbroken, and it did not enable the Emperor to withdraw any troops from Italy or the Rhine. It had, therefore, but an indirect bearing on Hungarian affairs, and if an armistice had been desirable before, it remained so now. It was impossible besides that the Emperor's Ministers, and if not they, then he himself, should fail to see what Stepney saw and presented to Marlborough at the time. In a memorandum which he drew up for the Duke when visiting him in his camp at Cron Weissenburg, he estimated the losses of the Imperial treasury by the One Year's War in Hungary at 7 million florins, in direct and indirect taxes, besides the impoverishment of the frontier provinces

<sup>1</sup> Rakoczi's *Instructions pour M. Michel*; Szeged, August 6, 1704; Fiedler, vol. ii. p. 449.



caused through the repeated kurucz inroads. The loss of life he computed at 30,000 on both sides, who, Austrians, labancz, and kurucz, were all alike the Emperor King's subjects. And further there were seven regiments of infantry and as many of cavalry, who might do service against the common enemy, retained to fight a civil war in Hungary. Considering that in spite of this state of things, which lasted eight years, the Emperor's armies fought and conquered at Höchstädt, Turin, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet, it is impossible not to wonder what they might not have achieved had the other half of his warlike subjects fought with them instead of against them.

But if both sides inclined to an armistice, their views with regard to its aims and conditions differed. The Imperialists wanted an armistice of long duration, which might lead to peace as they understood it. With this view they brought forward conditions tending to the security of their frontier provinces, the withdrawal of the kurucz forces farther east, and relief for their beleaguered fortresses. Rakoczi wanted an armistice merely for the purpose of getting his armies into better condition, and he saw no chance as yet for a peace such as he desired. Under these circumstances a short suspension of hostilities on the basis of the *status quo* was agreed upon at Gyöngyös, whereas the terms for a longer armistice such as the Austrians desired were to be settled at a more ceremonious

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conference by formal plenipotentiaries of both sides, and with the assistance of the mediators. Rakoczi appointed the town of Selmecz for its meeting, which is only about 9 miles distant from Vichne, where he intended to take the waters during October.

Before these arrangements were ratified in Vienna several changes occurred in the actual military situation. Heister, who during the last two months had been resting his exhausted troops, had started on a fourth campaign, with the object of reconquering the Trans-Danubian region. The situation was the same as in April, so were the men in command, and so the results. Palfy had been sent to Croatia to raise new levies and bring them north in support of Heister's operations. The Field-Marshal started from Somerja on the 16th of August, and in three days' forced marches covered the distance to Sarvar, about 123 miles. Karolyi, who after Forgach's departure was alone in command, had no intention of accepting an engagement, and succeeded in recrossing the Danube without being brought to bay. Heister pursued as far as Földvar, and leaving a small garrison in the earthworks erected there, retired to rest on his estate of Lovas Bereny, where, to his dismay and rage, he received the news of the armistice.

To retaliate on Heister's advance, accompanied by the usual devastations and cruelties, Bercsenyi sent new raids into Austria and Moravia. This time the kurucz came about 6000 men strong,

advanced as far as Dürnkrut, burned the town, plundered far and near, and retired with thousands of heads of cattle and all movables they could lay hands upon.

Of far more importance was the surrender of the town and fort of Kassa, which Forgach negotiated just before the armistice. This place was the metropolis of Northern Hungary, a town of about 10,000 inhabitants, the emporium of its trade with Poland and Silesia, and the seat of what little industry there was in the mainly agricultural region. Its inhabitants were mostly of German origin, but their staunch Protestantism had made them identify themselves with the national cause long ago. The returning of Kassa's cathedral to the use of the Catholics by General Belgiojoso about a hundred years ago had been the signal for the first Hungarian uprising against Austria. As a fortress it was of first rank in Hungary, had a garrison of 1500 men, 150 heavy guns, arms and ammunition in plenty. But it had been invested for wellnigh a year, provisions were running short, and no possible relief in sight. Already, in the middle of August, negotiations, in view of a capitulation, had begun between the two commanders, Montecucoli and Paul Orosz; and shortly afterwards Rakoczi sent Forgach to bring them to a final issue. He was as successful now as he had been in April before Eger. Montecucoli and Veterani signed the capitulation, by the terms of which Kassa was to be

surrendered on October 31, if not relieved in the meantime, and the outgoing garrison was to receive all the honours of war.<sup>1</sup> The fortress of Eperjes immediately followed Kassa's example, its Scotch Commander, Colonel Edward Wilson, signing a capitulation with Forgach on similar terms, whereupon Rakoczi sent him on the same errand to Szathmar, which was also already in agony.<sup>2</sup>

An illustrious company assembled in the quiet little mountain town of Selmecz in those October days of 1704. The Emperor had appointed four commissioners, viz. Archbishop Szechenyi, Baron Seilern, Count Kohary, and Count Sigismund Lamberg. Stepney and Bruyninx came likewise. Their mediation had not yet been formally accepted by the Hungarians, and Rakoczi had declared that this could be done only by a solemn act of the nation. But he had sent them word that this was merely a matter of form, the consent of the kingdom was not to be doubted, and that he would receive them with pleasure and gratitude. At the head of the Hungarian Commission, also of four members, was Bercsenyi. Besides these, many kurucz of note were either in the town, or in the baths of Vichne at the Prince's Court.

Great people in those days did not travel with

<sup>1</sup> Kassa's actual surrender and the capitulation of Eperjes took place already after the armistice.

<sup>2</sup> Forgach's successful negotiation for the capitulation of these fortresses made him write to Karolyi, "I am like a priest, wherever they are in agony, I am sent thither, they cannot die without me." Original letter in the archives of the Karolyi family dated Göncz, August 31, 1704.

merely a private secretary or aide-de-camp and one or two valets. Seilern, Kohary, and Bruyninx left Vienna together, and their suites formed a perfect caravan. Rakoczi was resolved to do full honour to the occasion, and had ordered two hundred kurucz hussars to the gates of Pozsony, to escort them on the rest of their journey. He could not alter the condition of the roads, and it took the commissioners four days to cover the 144 miles from Pozsony to Selmecz. When they neared their destination they found three gala-coaches with six horses each and outriders to meet them, and they entered the town amid a display of flags and the salute of guns. But aside from the ceremony of their reception there was small prospect for the success of their mission.

Peace was not in Rakoczi's view when he arrived at Vichne. Since he had brought forward the demand of a foreign guarantee affairs had been further complicated by his Transylvanian election. Peace such as he desired not being within sight, he was not inclined to prolong the armistice. Ersek Ujvar seemed ready to fall, and November was the most favourable month for reuniting the kurucz troops and keeping them under their colours. Under these circumstances it would have required more good-will and tact than Seilern brought with him to steer the conference to a successful issue.

What the kurucz leaders really thought is best illustrated by a chance remark of Bercsenyi.

Jealousies of his domineering disposition were ripe at all times, and now that Rakoczi had left, not only the lead of the negotiations, but also the honours of representation to him, they did not fail to show themselves openly. Forgach made himself their mouthpiece, and complained that, as in the days of the Austrians, the affairs of the nation were to be decided by an arbitrary commission, and that it was again a case of *de nobis sine nobis*. Bercsenyi replied by turning the complaint into ridicule, saying that it was really a case of "much ado about nothing."<sup>1</sup>

The composition of the Imperial Commission reflected the division of opinions which prevailed in Vienna with regard to the Hungarian question. During a year a conflict of feeling and interests had been waged around the Emperor. The pressure of the allies, the advice of the Elector Palatine, the efforts of the labancz nobles, the loss of power and prestige caused by the internal war, and, finally, considerations of the Emperor's position as King of Hungary spoke for conciliation. Opposed to them were powerful religious, political, and private interests. The Jesuits feared that a compromise with the rebels might lead to their expulsion; Kollonics and his disciples saw the destruction of their conceptions for unification and absolute rule; Heister bewailed the weakness of making concessions and the loss of opportunities for his own aggrandize-

<sup>1</sup> Bercsenyi to Forgach, October 11, *A.R.L.*, vol. iv. p. 162.

ment; and some of the Ministers felt their private interests engaged, either through the hope of obtaining a share in the expected confiscations, or, like Salm,<sup>1</sup> through the fear of having to give up what they had obtained. Out of these divided counsels had grown the first negotiations, the Emperor's answer of June 20, the acceptance of the conference, and now the choice of the commissioners. Two of them worked for conciliation, the third effaced himself, but the decisive voice belonged to Seilern, and he stood for all that was authoritative and repressive.

Lamberg had arrived at Selmech before his two colleagues from Vienna. He was a man of dull temperament,<sup>2</sup> and had figured in Rakoczi's trial, which made the mediators think that he would not be acceptable to the Hungarian chiefs.<sup>3</sup> No objection was raised, however, and he did his best to establish pleasant personal relations with them. He had accepted without any difficulties Rakoczi's passports, although they were issued in the name of "Rakoczi, Prince by the grace of God"; he had addressed Bercsenyi as Excellency, and written to Vienna that it would facilitate matters if the plenipotentiaries would mutually live with this courtesy. But Seilern, who as senior Privy Councillor was the head of the Commission, was of a different

<sup>1</sup> He had received the grant of an estate near Hatvan valued at 600,000 florins, the validity of which was contested by the Hungarians. Stepney to Cardonnel, September 5, 1704, No. 188, Simonyi, vol. i. p. 415.

<sup>2</sup> A sleepy animal, Bercsenyi calls him.

<sup>3</sup> Whitworth to Harley, September 20, No. 196, Simonyi, vol. i. p. 437.

stamp. He was a foreigner by birth,<sup>1</sup> a recent convert to the Catholic faith, a bureaucrat, and a champion of absolute power. A resolute enemy of the Hungarian cause, he would have considered any voluntary concession in matters of etiquette not as an act of graceful courtesy but as a derogation to the Emperor's authority, which for the time rested on his shoulders. He at once took exception not only to the preamble but also to the text of Rakoczi's passports, and refused to continue his journey unless they were altered. He lost more than a week in Pozsony with these squabbles, and when he arrived at Selmech began his task by offending Beresenyi and Szechenyi. He sent his compliments to the former through his secretary, who, while he spoke of his chief invariably as His Excellency, withheld this title from the Hungarian Commander. The reception took place before a numerous suite of officers and attendants, the slight was public and calculated, and although Beresenyi, whose pride was proverbial, abstained from giving expression to his resentment, it made further intercourse between him and Seilern, and consequently between the two commissions, impracticable. By common courtesy archbishops in Hungary were addressed as princes, but Seilern would not give this title to Szechenyi, and thus added another sting

<sup>1</sup> He was first in the Palatine's service, from which he passed into that of the Emperor; was made a baron, afterwards count. At the time he was rapidly coming to the front in Hungarian affairs, and soon to succeed Buccellini as Chancellor of Austria.



to the latter's relegation to second place in the Commission. To give also the mediators a taste of his amiability Seilern found fault with their Latin, and altogether justified the nickname of school-master by which he went in Selmech.<sup>1</sup>

Stepney had not returned from his visit to the Duke of Marlborough when the conference opened, and at the beginning the honour of the mediation rested on Bruyninx alone. He took part freely in the social life of the Hungarians, and on the 20th paid his respects to Rakoczi at Vichne, who kept him there to dine and sleep. The Prince spoke with such bitterness of Austria and everything pertaining thereto that the Dutch mediator returned with but scant hopes for the object of his mission. He expressed his disappointment next day to Szechenyi, but received assurances from Bercsenyi, who thought it important not to disregard the two maritime powers, that the Hungarians' willingness to avail themselves of the mediation was unaltered, and that they still hoped to obtain peace through their means. But the last illusions on this subject were destroyed two days later, when real business was begun and the Imperial demands and conditions brought forward by Seilern.

From the outset the drawing of the lines of demarcation had been the great obstacle to the armistice, the Austrians each time demanding that

<sup>1</sup> Stepney to Harley, November 3, 1704, No. 224; and Bercsenyi to Rakoczi, Selmech, October 22.

the kurucz troops should evacuate tracts of land which they actually held. At the last meeting at Gyöngyös the river Nyitra had been proposed for this line, but had not been accepted by Rakoczi. The provisional suspension of hostilities had been concluded on the *uti possidetis*, and the same principle demanded by him for the long truce. The form of his propositions had been found inadmissible in Vienna, but their substance not unreasonable by Prince Eugen, to whom they had been submitted at Landau.<sup>1</sup> Great, therefore, was the surprise and indignation when Seilern produced a new instrument composed of XV. Articles, the first of which demanded the retreat of the kurucz beyond the river Ipoly in the north, besides the evacuation of the Servian country and several tracts of land beyond the Tibiscus. These conditions implied the giving up of a country of more than 100 Hungarian square miles,<sup>2</sup> and were at once refused by Bercsenyi and his colleagues as unfit for discussion, but Seilern declared that he had no power to alter them, although in reality he had drawn them up himself.<sup>3</sup>

Lamberg, who wished for a compromise, wrote to Vienna to obtain some concessions. On his way his equerry met Stepney, who was hastening to Selmech, arriving there on the 27th, only to see that his errand was hopeless. He at once called upon Bercsenyi, was received with every mark of dis-

<sup>1</sup> Stepney to Harley, November 3, 1704, No. 224.

<sup>2</sup> About 2500 English square miles.

<sup>3</sup> Stepney to Harley, January 24, 1705, No. 226.

tion, but was informed that Seilern's demands had made all further endeavours impossible. Next day he went to Vichne, where he spent two days as Rakoczi's guest, but received only the confirmation of what Bercsenyi had told him already. The only argument he could use to shake the determination of the Prince was to point to the uncertainties of war and the fate of Tököli, and recently to that of the Elector of Bavaria. But Rakoczi declared—and the future proved that with truth—that he was willing to take the consequences, that the event was in the hands of God, but that it was better for them all to die sword in hand, if it must be, than to accept a new lease of bondage. He further explained that Hungary's connection with Austria was of the same nature as Scotland's with England, whereas the Austrians wanted to treat them as the English did Ireland, as a conquered country, without, however, ever having conquered them. Before giving his final answer, the Prince assembled about twenty of his principal adherents, and after council with them informed Stepney that they would not consent to a further prolongation of the armistice, but proceed with their war until they saw fairer dispositions for their rights and liberties in the Imperial Court.

A few more days were spent with replies and counter-replies, neither party wishing to bear the odium of the rupture, but on the 30th the conference broke up, and on the next day the truce expired.

In taking leave from Stepney and Bruyninx,

Rakoczi told them that as the Emperor's political allies they might desire peace at any price, whether good or bad, but as Christians and members of free peoples he felt sure they could not but wish the Hungarians a sincere and lasting peace.

Whatever may be said for or against the comparison with Scotland, there is no doubt that the Austrians of the period looked upon Hungary very much as the English did on Ireland. There the analogy was complete even as to the fiscal legislation. Like the famous English taxes on Irish wool, the customs line between the two countries, the export duties on Hungarian products and the privileges and exemptions granted to Austrian producers and traders had for their object the enriching of one side at the expense of the other. Seilern himself was a typical representative of those views and tendencies, and his selection for the mission to Selmech could not have failed to defeat its purpose, even if the Hungarian leaders had been better inclined to receive them. When he returned to Vienna the report was spread that the negotiations had been broken off because the Hungarians insisted on the annulment of the laws enacted at Pozsony in 1687, and because Rakoczi wanted to be recognized Prince of Transylvania, Bercsenyi made Palatine, and the other leaders confirmed in the lands and estates they had taken possession of. Demands like these had no doubt been freely talked about in the kurucz camp and among Rakoczi's

French and Bavarian dinner-guests, but they had never been brought forward in the official negotiations for the armistice.

But the English had conquered Ireland. It remained to be seen whether Austria could conquer Hungary.

## CHAPTER V

The battle of Nagyszombat—English diplomacy in Vienna and French diplomacy in Hungary—Campaigns and negotiations till Emperor Leopold's death, November 1704—June 1705.

THE armistice expired on the last day of October. A fortnight later the fortress of Ersek Ujvar capitulated. Forty years ago it had fallen into the hands of the Turks, and its being allowed to remain there after the victory of St. Gotthard had been one of the chief grievances of the Hungarian people against the Peace of Vasvar. Twenty years later its reconquest marked the turning of the tide which freed the country from the Ottoman yoke. Since then its maintenance had been neglected, and it fell more through the connivance of its Hungarian inhabitants and the treachery of some German soldiers than through actual force of arms.

The capitulation of the different fortified places provided the kurucz army with guns and siege material, the arrival of French officers and expert engineers enabled it to use them. Already the year before Lewis XIV. had sent a diplomatic agent, M. de Fierville,<sup>1</sup> some officers and money; now he

<sup>1</sup> He took an active part in the kurucz campaigns, fought in the battle of Nagyszombat, where he was taken prisoner by the Austrians. The lords of Fierville in Normandy belonged to the Olonde branch of the Harcourt family.

allowed Rakoczi a regular subsidy, sent some more officers, accredited a regular diplomatic representative at his court, and received his agent at his own. In substance and in form he did more for him than he had ever done for any of his precursors, but to his demand for a formal alliance he turned a deaf ear. Bercsenyi hit the nail on the head when he compared the French and Bavarian assurances with the huntsman's horn, which is merely blown for the excitement of the pack. It is unfortunate that in the decisive moments he did not act in accordance with this judgment.

It was at the time of the conferences in Selmech that Lewis XIV.'s new envoy, the Comte Des Alleurs,<sup>1</sup> arrived at Durazzo on his way to Rakoczi. He stayed some time at Belgrad, and only joined the Prince in February at Eger, but the officers who came with him repaired to Vichne at once. Amongst them were La Mothe, La Maire, Riviere, engineers; Narval and d'Abzac cavalry; Chassant and Bonnefou, infantry officers; of whom the three former and Chassant served in the kurucz army to the end.

The siege of Lipotvar, a fortress which had been erected forty years before to make up for the loss of Ujvar, and was in better condition than the latter, was the next operation decided upon. It was conducted according to the plans laid out by La Mothe. To

<sup>1</sup> Pierre Puchot Comte de Des Alleurs (born 1843) began life as page to Mlle de Montpensier, became Captain of the Guards, Marechal de Camp, Envoy and Minister to Berlin, 1698-1709, then to the Elector of Cologne, 1701-1704, to Rakoczi, 1704-1709, Ambassador to Constantinople, 1709-1716, married to Mlle de Lutzelburg, died 1725.

cover the rear and flanks of the besiegers, Bercsenyi and Sennyei, who had at last been relieved from his long command before Szathmar, went into positions near the Austrian frontier, while Bottyan, who had in the meanwhile definitely joined the kurucz army, was sent down to the Danube to cross it, if possible, and reconquer the country south.

Heister did not feel in sufficient strength to take the field forthwith. During the armistice he had retreated to the lines of the river Raba. After its expiration he withdrew his troops still further towards the frontier, and went himself to Vienna to urge the obtaining of reinforcements. They arrived too late to enable him to do anything for the relief of Ujvar, but by the end of November his forces numbered about 12,000 men, while three regiments of cuirassiers and contingents from Styria and the two Austrias were yet to come. On the 18th of December he crossed the Hungarian frontier again and started for the relief of Leopoldstadt.

It was now for the kurucz leaders to decide whether they would accept open battle or not. Rakoczi had his misgivings based on the indifferent armament of his troops and the insufficiency of their officers. But to avoid the battle meant to raise the siege and thereby to discourage the country. Besides, the Hungarians had the advantage of knowing Heister's object, the possible routes by which he could come, and, in consequence, of being able to choose their own ground for the encounter. Berc-



senyi's arguments and plans were approved by all the other generals and also by the French officers. They prevailed, and the battle was decided upon. It is characteristic of the temper of the two leaders that on the morning of the decisive day, when the two armies were already in sight and a movement of Heister seemed to indicate his intention of avoiding the engagement, it was Bercsenyi who suggested whether it might not be better to fall in with his wishes, and Rakoczi who answered that they had not come to crack nuts, and who gave the order to attack.

In numbers, both sides were about equal. Heister had started from Dürnkrot after receiving the reinforcements he was expecting, and on his march had been joined by Herberstein with 4000 men. These brought his forces up to wellnigh 20,000,<sup>1</sup> of whom 83 were squadrons of cavalry. Of artillery he had 24 field-guns. Rakoczi had 17 regiments of cavalry, 15 battalions infantry, and 6 guns. But neither cavalry nor infantry were in full numbers, the regiments of the former averaging about 800 and the battalions of the latter 500 men, altogether a force from 22,000 to 24,000.

<sup>1</sup> The author of *Feldzüge des Prinzen Eugen*, vol. vi., says that Heister started from Dürnkrot with about 7000 infantry and 4000 cavalry, but adds that the real numbers cannot be ascertained. But two pages above he puts the forces under Heister's immediate command on the march at 12,000 men, and there seems to be no reason imaginable why he should have left any of them behind. Herberstein's infantry at Pozsony and the two regiments on their march from Silesia, all of which took part in the battle of Tynau, he estimates at 3500 men. If to these are added the labancz troops under Nadaady's command the numbers remain not far below the Hungarian computation. Kolupovics, a contemporary author, estimates the Imperialists at 20,000, which tallies exactly with Count Francis Esterhazy's testimony, who fought in the battle on the Imperial side.

Heister's army was composed of professional soldiers. There were a few battalions of newly levied recruits, and there was some labancz militia amongst them, but most of his regiments were battle-scarred veterans, his cuirassiers of European renown. Rakoczi's troops were volunteers full of courage, devotion, and enthusiasm; but sadly wanting in armament, training, and discipline. The lustre of the prince's name, the talents of Bercsenyi for organization, the accession of some great nobles, the general conditions of things, and the absence of all resistance in the beginning had transformed the original riots into a great national uprising. The constituted bodies of the kingdom, such as they existed, counties and towns, had declared for it; the land-owning gentry, which was the backbone of the nation, had flocked under its standards. But the popular character of the army's main body had remained unchanged. The superior officers, generals, brigadiers, and colonels were appointed by the prince, and he could choose them with a view to merit, birth, or influence; but the mass of the subaltern, and still more the non-commissioned officers, he had to accept as he found them, elected by their men, being of the same material, having the same habits as they and consequently holding but little authority over them. These men had voluntarily joined, and their temper was to be managed.

With the exception of a few regiments the troops received as yet no regular pay, and lived either on

the provisions the counties provided for them or on plunder. The greatest difficulty was with the infantry, as every Hungarian gentleman wanted to serve on horseback, it being a common saying in the country that to walk on one's legs was fit for dogs, but that a gentleman was created to be carried by animals.

Rakoczi and Bercsenyi understood these defects fully as well as Forgach and Des Alleurs, but they understood also the general conditions and the genius of the nation which had created them, and knew that the evil could not be remedied at once by introducing the military regulations of foreign countries or giving to their soldiers regular pay, for which, besides, the money would have been lacking. Forgach's attempts to apply the Austrian regulations to the kurucz army only led to his unpopularity amongst his troops and constant embroilments with his brother generals, nor were Des Alleurs's endeavours to model the Hungarian Army after the French pattern crowned with better success. His ignorance of any language but his own made his intercourse with Hungarians difficult, his economical habits made them think little of him; while the caustic remarks in which he openly indulged were spread about, and wounded the people to whom he had come on a friendly mission. It is a curious fact that Stepney,<sup>1</sup> who represented the Emperor's

<sup>1</sup> George Stepney (1663-1707) had been British Minister in Vienna, from 1693 to 1695, and a second time 1702-1705. For his biography see *Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by Sidney Lee, vol. liv. His despatches are

ally in Vienna, became, through his intercourse with Rakoczi and Bercsenyi, a warm friend of Hungary and Hungarians, while Des Alleurs saw only their

collected and preserved at the Public Record Office in London, and have been published in 1863 by Ernest Symonds in three volumes. With regard to his quarrel with the Austrian Ministers, and notably Count Wratislaw, the present author has found some new and hitherto unknown material in the Vienna archives.

As early as January 1704, Wratislaw, then in London, had written to Emperor Leopold that under the pretext of religious Stepney was urging the intervention of his government, that he (Wratislaw) was doing his best to correct these representations, that he had already spoken to Marlborough about them, that he Duke did not care much for Stepney, but that England had nobody knowing German so well, and could not therefore dispense with his services. Similar complaints were repeated in later letters, although Wratislaw distinctly stated once that they were founded on suspicion, and that he had no facts to substantiate them. Nevertheless, he spoke in the same sense at The Hague, and it was from there that Stepney learned the Imperial Ministers' censure of his conduct. He resented it bitterly, and being a man of high spirits, directly assailed the Imperial Government and wrote to Kaunitz to prove the injustice of Wratislaw's aspersions, and to ask that they should be removed. The unpleasant relations between the two men continued, however, and when Stepney arrived in the autumn of 1704, in Marlborough's camp at Leon Werthenberg, where Wratislaw also was sitting, the latter wrote to Vienna that Stepney had merely come to induce the Duke to take the part of the Hungarian rebels, but that the latter had too much common sense to do it.

Prince Eugen had presented a formal complaint against Stepney, but Marlborough persuaded him to withdraw it, and the matter was placated over by a letter from Emperor Leopold to his Minister, Count Galles, in London (February 30, 1705), charging him to declare that the Emperor had no grounds for distrusting or being displeased with Stepney, and would be pleased to see him continue his services in Vienna. The Emperor added, however, that Galles was not to make use of the latter assurance if there was any prospect of the British Government removing Stepney of their own free will.

An impartial perusal of Stepney's correspondence will convince the reader that Stepney's real sympathy for the Hungarian cause developed later in his personal intercourse with Rakoczi and Bercsenyi. The idea of English mediation had not originated in his but in Hedges' head. He had opposed it because he foresaw the offence it would give in Vienna (see his letter to Stanhope, December 17, 1704, I. 506). When it had been decided upon he worked for it with all soul, and to the satisfaction of his government. The friction he had with the Austrian Ministers was the natural outcome of the situation. They had accepted the mediation, but hated it, and tried to get out of it. In the course of events, as he became acquainted with the Hungarian leaders, he got to like them, and it was then that he became a warm friend of their cause.

Stepney was buried in Westminster Abbey, where his monument now stands in the south aisle.

defects, misjudged them, and thus did harm to their cause, which was that of his king.<sup>1</sup>

As fortress after fortress had surrendered a great many German soldiers and some officers had taken service in the kurucz army. Of the latter some, like Baron Limprecht and the unfortunate Eckstein, remained faithful to the end; others, like Scharudy and Bremer, turned traitors to the new cause at the first occasion. It was the treason of the former which greatly contributed to the loss of the battle of Nagyszombat, and taught Rakoczi his first lesson about the small reliance to be placed on deserters. He received his last eleven years later, when Captain Hartel, who had played an important part in the surrender of Érsek Ujvar and been rewarded by Rakoczi with a lieutenant-colonelcy and the gift of an estate, conspired in Poland for his assassination.

<sup>1</sup> Ferriol, who was French Ambassador in Constantinople when Des Alleurs was in Hungary, writes of him - "Au lieu flatter les Hongrois et les laisser combattre à leur manière selon l'ancien usage de leurs pères le comte Des Alleurs s'obstina à les réduire à une discipline dont ils n'étaient pas capables. Ce n'était pas connaître les intérêts du roi et du prince Rakoczi." Still more interesting are Bercsenyi's remarks on the subject of discipline. "Forgach ought to be entrusted with a universal code for regulated soldiery. He knows all about rules and regulations. He often asks me not to oppose codified rules, because they are good. I grant it, it is good to command those who will obey. . . . But the Hungarians will get tired of it before getting accustomed to it. . . . The Hungarian has the soul of a volunteer, and will never be nailed down, neither by monthly pay nor by regulations. He is ruled by impulse, not by reason. This is bad and ought to be corrected, but never without sense. . . . To whatever discipline and order we may try to break Hungarians, they will never get accustomed to fight otherwise, they will either pursue or run away. Even in King Mathias's days the black army was not Hungarian. Hungarian bravery is based on self-confidence, and will brook no curb. If pay is only to insure that the troops should not disband we must give them toffee too. It is all no use, if they do not win they get tired, if they do they want to carry their gains home."

But if the kurucz forces were lacking in that cohesion and endurance which training alone can give, they had hitherto shown a formidable power of recuperation. Heister had already led four campaigns against them, he had driven Karolyi in headlong flight before him, he had defeated Forgach in open battle, he had pushed Bercsenyi back step by step. But he had never gained anything but temporary possession of the soil his soldiers trod upon; the Hungarians had rallied as quickly as they had dispersed, and now at the opening of his fifth campaign he had to begin anew, and march from Austria into Hungary, just as if he never had been there.

The battle of Nagyszombat was fought on a short December afternoon. Heister had spent Christmas night at Rozsindol, hesitating whether he would march on the enemy, whose numbers rumour had wildly exaggerated. In the early morning a messenger from Scharudy brought him information about the true state of things, and he decided in the affirmative. His army advanced in four columns, two in front, two in the rear; all the train, ammunitions, provisions, and baggage between them. Bercsenyi had proposed that Rakoczi should occupy Nagyszombat with his centre, and the two wings he posted on the slight elevation right and left of the town; but Rakoczi observed that this position might easily be turned and the Hungarians obliged to give battle on a field unfavourable to their cavalry if

Heister continued his march on Leopoldstadt. He decided to descend into the valley before the town between the rivers Tirna and Parna. There he occupied the centre of the position, with Sennyei, Vaj, and Fierville around him ; on his right wing he placed Bercsenyi, on his left Anthony Esterhazy. Ebeczky and Ocskay had been sent with their brigades to Rozsindol to skirt the enemy on his march, the first on his left, the latter on his right, but owing to his closed formation could do nothing but observe and follow him.

It was one o'clock in the afternoon when the Hungarians, who had entered into their lines during the forenoon, saw Heister's cuirassiers and dragoons appear before the village of Gerencser. Shortly afterwards cannonading began on both sides, and Ebeczky and Ocskay, leaving the enemy's flanks fell into line, the former with Bercsenyi the latter with Esterhazy. Heister was marching north-east, which made Bercsenyi think that he wished to avoid battle, and send the question of hesitation to Rakoczi. But on receiving the order to attack he sent Ebeczky forward on the Austrian columns. Ilosvay, Onody, Somogyi, Sreter, mistaking the signal which was meant for Ebeczky only, followed, and riding together over Virmont's and Haslinger's infantry, driving back Baireuth's dragoons, broke through one of Heister's four columns and penetrated to the train. There the men gave themselves up to plunder, their officers losing control over them. A similar attack,

with the same result, had taken place on the left wing, where Ocskay's, Andrassy's, Goda's, and Buday's hussars had likewise broken the enemy's lines. On the sight of these developments, Fierville ordered his infantry to advance, and Rakoczi's French grenadiers, his household regiment, and Farkas' county levies attacked with the bayonet. Heister, whose rear columns were hampered by the train before them, saw the day in danger. Some kurucz riders had penetrated to the place where he stood, and he was saved from certain death by his Hungarian aide-de-camp Count Czobor, who threw himself between the Marshal and an attacking kurucz hussar and shot the latter dead. But the advance with so many regiments with Ebeczky and Oczkay, which were meant to keep their lines, had created a gap in the Hungarian position, and Heister, seeing the weak spot, sent two squadrons of Fels cuirassiers to break it in. The ensuing confusion was heightened by the defection of Scharudy's 500 Germans, who began firing on their kurucz comrades. The move of the Fels cuirassiers, with the help of Scharudy's treason, decided the day. Rakoczi, who had been watching the battle from a hill north-east of the town, wanted to come to the rescue and attack the cuirassiers with his carabineers, but was forcibly prevented by Vaj and Ottlyk, who judged—and rightly so—that the national cause was indissolubly linked with his life. The moment was lost, the left wing cut off from the main army, Ebeczky's



plundering hussars surprised and thrown by Cusani cuirassiers, while Heister re-established everywhere his broken ranks. Rakoczi, seeing the prevailing confusion and judging the day lost, gave the signal for a general retreat, much to the consternation of his yet victorious left wing.

"We have beaten the Germans and confusion has beaten us," thus did Bercsenyi comfort Rakoczi the day after the battle, dwelling at the same time with satisfaction on the bravery displayed by their troops. Heister himself bore testimony to the splendid charge of Rakoczi's infantry in the centre, and the events of the ensuing campaign contributed still further to modify his opinions about the fighting power of the kurucz army.<sup>1</sup> The losses of the Imperialists were greater than those of the Hungarians. Including the Germans who went over to the enemy during or after the battle, the latter lost about 1200, whereas the dead and wounded of the former numbered about 2000 men.

The only positive result of Heister's victory was the relief of Leopoldstadt. As for anything else it was beating the air. The Austrian Field-marshal had not been in condition to pursue the beaten enemy, and the few days' rest which he had been obliged to grant to his troops sufficed for the kurucz leaders to rally their scattered forces and put

<sup>1</sup> "With regard to my conversations with Bishop Pyber . . . he says that Heister does not think so poorly of us any longer, he now talks of peace himself. He inquired after Selmecz and conceded that it was not our fault." —Bercsenyi to Rakoczi, March 18, 1705.

them again into fighting order. As was their wont, the latter had disbanded after the battle, and Bercsenyi found himself at Sellye on the river Vagh, whither he had retreated, with only about 2000 men round him. But on the 29th, already he sent skirmishing parties to worry Heister's resting troops at Nagyszombat, and three days later General Bottyan, whom Rakoczi had ordered up from the Danube, marched around the enemy's flanks into the White Mountains, where he found many soldiers of the kurucz left wing who had been cut off from the main body after the turning of the battle, made a raid into Moravia, and, avoiding Heister's pursuit, arrived safely back to the banks of the Vagh with the troops he had rescued and the booty he had made.

Rakoczi had retreated first to Kis Tapolcsany, and then to Leva behind the river Garam. Here he received the news of the capitulation of Szathmar, whose commanders, Glöckelsperg and Löwenburg, had at last surrendered to Forgach after a siege of fifteen months. Here he was also joined by Karolyi, whose discontent over the blame his campaigns of last year had elicited had been increased by the fact that the honour of Szathmar's capitulation had been given to Forgach and not to him, and by the imprisonment of two of his favourite lieutenants. But his ill-humour was appeased by the gift of two rich estates, Debro and Erdod, and he arrived delighted at finding his services so highly valued,

and secretly gratified by seeing his views on warfare justified by the event of Nagyszombat.

A few weeks after his defeat Rakoczi saw himself not only in safety from the enemy but in a position to lay plans for operations on a larger scale than before. The defence of the lines of the Vagh was entrusted to Bercsenyi, the reconquest of the country south and west of the Danube was to be the object of Karolyi's and Bottyan's operations.

About the middle of January Heister advanced to the river Vagh, but found Bercsenyi occupying the other side with such considerable forces that he did not care to risk another encounter. The country he was in had been occupied by the kurucz army during the whole of last year, and was completely eaten out. Want of provisions forced the Marshal to return to Nagyszombat and the neighbouring towns of Bazin, Modor, and St. Gyorgy, which were likewise in a pitiable condition.<sup>1</sup> The news of this retreat three weeks after the victory caused deep depression in Vienna, and made Stepney write that it was clear that the Emperor could never reduce Hungary by force alone. The depression grew into consternation when, a fortnight later, Karolyi appeared again before the gates

<sup>1</sup> "We are still alive, the few of us who could remain here, but our neighbours are constantly dying, half of the inhabitants have died. Indeed we are out of everything, so that we hardly get our daily bread, our furniture is spoiled, our cattle lost, our corn thrown to the winds, our houses ruined, our cellars empty, our shops plundered, we have neither hay nor fodder—in one word, we are stricken to the ground, every house full of miserable beggars and sick Lazaruses."—Bishop Pyber to Stephan Balogh on the state of Nagyszombat, March 13, 1705.

of Vienna, burning twenty-three villages on his way, and taking plunder to the value of about half a million of florins. About the same time Ocskay made another raid into Moravia, where he visited Prince Liechtenstein's estates, and took his horses and cattle away.

Heister did not know which way to turn. He had run after Bottyan and missed him, and now pursued Karolyi and missed him likewise. By the middle of February he transferred his headquarters into the island of Csalloköz, where he occupied a more central position for observing the enemy, and where his exhausted troops could find better accommodation. But he had hardly arrived there when he learned that Trencseny was sorely pressed by Petroczy, and would fall unless relieved. So he marched north again, but although he succeeded in revictualling the fortress, he did so at the expense of the condition of his troops. Bercsenyi, whose army again numbered about 22,000, was continually on his flanks and on his rear, and Heister's return march closely resembled a flight. On his arrival in Nagyszombat he evacuated the town which he had conquered ten weeks ago, left about 3000 infantry in the three smaller mountain towns, brought his sick and invalids to Pozsony, and returned with his cavalry again into the Csalloköz.

In the meanwhile Karolyi had set out for the reconquest of the Trans-Danubian region. For the third time events repeated themselves. As soon as

he arrived counties and towns returned to Rakoczi's allegiance, the kurucz bands, who since last autumn had been hiding in the forests of Bakony, rallied under his standards ; Bezeregy, Balogh, and others who had been fighting under Bottyan on the other side of the Danube returned to their native country. But it was all of short duration. Karolyi and his Trans-Tibiscians had never been able to establish a firm hold over the people of this region and to organize them for a serious resistance. Since their last visit in the preceding autumn they had learned nothing and forgotten nothing. The troops committed depredations, their leader levied contributions, and when the enemy approached their one idea was to get out of his reach. In vain did Bercsenyi urge Karolyi to hold out, as he was preparing a diversion which was sure to recall Heister. Karolyi only thought of safety, but was not as fortunate this time as he had been before. Heister had crossed the Danube with 4000 horsemen, and on March 31 Karolyi allowed himself to be surprised at Kiliti. He was utterly routed, and in such headlong haste did he and his rough-riders flee from the enemy that on the next day they were already at Kalocsa, a distance of 70 miles.

Bercsenyi had been as good as his word. While Heister's cavalry won easy triumphs in the south his infantry perished in the north-west. On Karolyi's urgent appeals for help Bercsenyi had organized a force under Daniel Esterhazy and sent

it against the three towns of Modor, Bazin, and St. György, where Heister had left garrisons of 1100, 900, and 700 men respectively. These scattered troops, exhausted by previous marches and fatigues, demoralized by want of provisions and irregular pay, in face of overwhelming numbers surrendered without an attempt at resistance. Their arms, ammunition, and stores fell into the hands of the kurucz, they themselves were sent across the frontier, and in their defenceless condition many of them were slain by the Slovak peasantry. Learning of these disasters, and that Bercsenyi was marching against his remaining infantry in the Csalloköz, Heister returned north with the same break-neck haste as Karolyi had fled before, but arrived in such condition that he had to rest his horses and men during the next weeks under the walls of Komarom. There he received the news of his recall. His fifth campaign, which had begun with the victory of Nagyszombat had ended in the ruin of his army. His infantry, with the exception of one regiment of recruits and the invalids whom he had left in Pozsony, was lost, his cavalry exhausted, and the towns which he had taken as the fruit of his victory were again in the hands of the enemy. Prince Eugen's prediction that Heister would ruin one army after the other without ever achieving anything had been confirmed by events, and the measure which he had recommended was at last taken. On April 11 Heister was deprived of his command.

The failure of the campaign and the pressure of their allies turned the endeavours of the Imperial Council again toward the effectuation of a peaceful settlement. Sympathies for Hungary were strong in England and Holland in the early part of 1705. The diplomatic action of both countries was undoubtedly inspired by selfish motives,<sup>1</sup> but public opinion instinctively sided with a people fighting for constitutional liberty against arbitrary power, and was still more moved by the idea that the cause of Hungary was that of the Protestant religion. The Austrian statesmen viewed these dispositions with dismay and irritation, but the arguments which they used to combat them were singularly infelicitous. Count Wratislaw might point with some show of plausibility to the fervent catholicism of Rakoczi and his principal generals, Bercsenyi, Forgach, and Karolyi, although he omitted to mention that Rakoczi's Court was mostly

<sup>1</sup> Godolphin told Count Gallas outright that the Emperor ought to settle the Hungarian troubles anyhow, because he would always be able to redress matters there afterwards, which was not the case with regard to his interests elsewhere. See Count Gallas' reports of September 1, 1705, and September 11. Godolphin said that if the Emperor could not come to an arrangement with Hungary it would be better to abandon it altogether, because he could always regain it later, whereas the loss and ruin of the Duke of Savoy would be irretrievable. Gallas' and Hofmann's correspondence is full of complaints about the difficulties of their position owing to the Hungarian affairs. The English Government were irritated by the Emperor's hesitation in accepting their mediation and the guarantee demanded by the Hungarians. They did not believe in his power to bring the Hungarians to submission by force alone as long as the war with France lasted, and Gallas had many bitter things to hear from Godolphin as well as from Harley and Hedges. It is a curious thing that the Imperial Court, which was still too proud to give the title of majesty to Queen Anne, had to submit to this humiliating interference in their internal affairs. See Gallas' and Hofmann's despatches of 1705.

composed of Protestants,<sup>1</sup> and also distorted the true state of things in saying that the Protestants did not number more than 5 per cent of the total population in Hungary. But when the Imperial Minister in London, Count Gallas, tried to persuade the British Government that the Hungarian rebellion was only due to the frivolity, obstinacy, and malignity of the nation it was evident that it was a case either of talking silly nonsense or of giving a dog a bad name preparatory to hanging him. Unfortunately the conviction was general in Austria that it was the inherent wickedness of the Hungarians which made them insist on being governed according to their own laws, and refuse the assimilation with the Emperor's hereditary provinces.

On February 26 the House of Commons voted an address to Queen Anne requesting her to continue her endeavours for the pacification of Hungary, to which she replied that she would do so with all imaginable earnestness. About the same time the States-General conceived the project to send special embassies to Vienna<sup>2</sup> in order to give more weight to their mediation. The English

<sup>1</sup> Adam Vaj, George Otlyk, Sigismund Janoky, Paul Rhaday, George Gerhart, John Papay, John Radvanszky, and John Hellenbach were all Protestants, and in all civil affairs had paramount influence, with the single exception of Bercsenyi.

<sup>2</sup> They had at first conceived the idea to send a deputation to Vienna to petition the Emperor for the transaction. Count Goess, the Imperial Minister at The Hague, did all that he could to turn them from this intention, but it was only with the Duke of Marlborough's powerful support that he succeeded. See the despatches of Goess of December 16 and 24, 1704, in the Imperial archives in Vienna.



Government readily assented to the proposition, and Lord Paget, who had been one of the negotiators at Carlowitz, was at first selected for the purpose, but some time later, when the intention was actually carried out, it was Lord Sunderland who received the commission.

Count Kaunitz had died in January, and the nominal direction of Hungarian affairs had passed into the hands of Count Harrach. Unfortunately there were always so many opposing influences at work in Vienna that the real decisions did not depend on the formal heads of departments. Seilern's instructions for Selmech had never been communicated to Kaunitz, but had been drawn up by himself with the aid of two Jesuits.<sup>1</sup> He was persistently opposed to all concessions. In December, when Heister had started out to strike, he had declared that nothing but arms could decide the quarrel. Four weeks later, when the Marshal's retreat from the Vagh had damped the hopes in Vienna, he maintained that this was still less a proper moment for treating, as the Hungarians might attribute any new overtures, not to the good-will of the Emperor, but to necessity. But peaceful advices prevailed, Szechenyi was again requested to renew his efforts, and new terms going beyond those of June last were offered. Residence of the King of the Romans in the country, convocation of Parliament in every third year, satisfaction for the excesses

<sup>1</sup> Stepney to Harley, January 24.

committed by the Imperial troops before the present troubles, maintenance of the Hungarian Chancellory and other Hungarian institutions, and reduction of the price of salt were promised; the question of maintaining foreign garrisons in Hungary, of the expulsion of the Jesuits, of the independence of the Hungarian Treasury from the Imperial Board, of trial of Hungarians in Hungary alone, and all matters of taxation were referred to the diet. The former assurance with regard to the administration of justice, codification of laws, amnesty, conferring of secular dignities in the country on Hungarians only were reaffirmed, the omission of Hungarian representatives at the peace negotiations of Carlowitz and the object of the much-complained-of *commissio nec acquistica* explained or excused. But the hereditary succession and the abolition of the right of armed resistance were maintained, and not one word was said about the foreign guarantee.

These new overtures reached the Hungarian leaders early in March. Shortly before Des Alleurs had arrived at Rakoczi's Court in Eger and been received in solemn audience. Friendly assurances and encouragement he brought in plenty, but not the formal alliance which the Prince coveted. But even without it the object of his mission corresponded but too well with the dispositions of the man to whom he was sent. He came to dissuade from peace one who was bent on aims which could

be achieved only by war.<sup>1</sup> Hitherto fortune had been wonderfully kind to Rakoczi. Edward IV. after his landing at Ravenspur, or Napoleon after his return from Elba had not been carried more triumphantly from exile into supreme power. Well might he have pondered over the question whether it would last and how it was to end. But the hope was strong in him that he could link his fortunes to those of France and force the King's hands to a treaty which would assure his inclusion in the general peace.

Bercsenyi was less sanguine in his belief in French promises and his outlook on the situation. The advice he gave Rakoczi at the time shows that he would have been inclined to treat on the offered basis, and that he appreciated the situation justly. He represented to his friend that Des Alleurs had only brought words and no realities, that it was sound policy to treat for peace when the enemy was asking for it, and that half a loaf was better than no bread at all.<sup>2</sup> But the decision did

<sup>1</sup> Des Alleurs arrived in Eger on March 11 after a journey of twenty-nine days from Temesvar. Rakoczi received him first privately, and assured him at once that he would oppose a conclusion of peace with all means in his power. See Des Alleurs's report to Louis XIV. of March 14 in *Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères* in Paris.

<sup>2</sup> Bercsenyi's letters to Rakoczi. March 18—"I only wonder what this famous general has brought, what alliance, what succour."

March 20—"I see the envoy has not come with much. . . . I do not despair, but, speaking in a natural way, I do not see how we can resist the enemy."

March 27—"Do not believe too much in French promises, for I see he (Des Alleurs) *venit mutare verba, facere figuram, non rem*. My dear Lord, for you I live, for you I die, but I beseech you, do not let us wait till the last extremity. It is better now when they are after us. As on the steps of

not rest with him, and Rakoczi showed no haste to treat. He had to consider the sentiments of his adherents, many of whom sincerely wished peace,<sup>1</sup> but the absence of any declaration in the Imperial propositions about the guarantee gave him a ground upon which to rally all opinions. In his reply to Stepney and Bruyninx he again insisted on the acceptance of this demand as an absolute necessity, and Szechenyi reported that the whole question hinged upon this point, and strongly urged its concession.<sup>2</sup>

While the Hungarian leaders were deliberating

a graduated stairway, let us stop now if we can. It will be easier and better to climb higher afterwards."

March 29—"You can never depend on French assistance; if the Germans think otherwise and believe there is more in it, so much the better."

April 11—"With regard to the articles brought by the deputies and your reply I answer briefly. . . . Although the articles require no resolution at present, it is worthy of consideration that they refer even such points to the diet, which by virtue of the cardinal prerogative of the law cannot be put into question, as if they were yet to be decided, but on the other hand it is good that they have receded from mere generalities and offered an opportunity for entering into particulars. With regard to your reply I cannot understand the object of the question at the end as to how they wish to make the agreement, for this we cannot leave to them. Therefore I answer, either we want to gain time or a treaty, if the former, your question serves the purpose, if the latter, it would be better, while briefly thanking for the mediation, to remind them of the guarantee. For although there is in those articles much other grave matter for remonstrance besides the guarantee, still in order to show that you wish to facilitate a treaty, and to clear up the questions through the mediators, you had better admit their presentation." It must be said, however, that his later behaviour was in flagrant contradiction with these sentiments.

<sup>1</sup> Karolyi writes: "Let us make peace, for heaven's sake" (Szechenyi to Rakoczi, March 20). Rakoczi told Des Alleurs then that many of his generals were in favour of accepting terms if only tolerably advantageous, the gentry and the common people were for the continuation of war, the high nobility and clergy for the Emperor.

<sup>2</sup> See Rakoczi's letter to Stepney, and Bruyninx's and Szechenyi's letters to the Emperor, Baron Scalvinsz, Prince Esterhazy, Count Harrach, and Prince Eugen, April 28, the former in *Histoire des Révolutions*, vol. i. p. 252, the latter in Miller's *Epistolæ*, vol. ii. pp. 148-164.

on their reply, Emperor Leopold lay mortally ill in his Hofburg at Vienna. The people there showed the deepest concern and affection for him, and made fervent prayers for the continuance of his reign.<sup>1</sup> On the 5th of May he died. When the news of his death reached Bercsenyi he urged Rakoczi to convoke a diet for declaring the throne vacant, and added: "Providence has created a vacancy. For the late King has been lacking in integrity, and the clauses referring to iniquity and fraud has deprived his successor. Now the way will be open for your envoys at every court, we will have plenty of wooers for this beautiful woman, the kingdom of Hungary."<sup>2</sup>

The difference of sentiments was in the nature of things. The Viennese had known Leopold I. from personal contact, and to them he had always appeared mild and benignant. The Hungarians knew him only as a sovereign whose rule had been one of oppression, harshness, and strife. About his domestic virtues and good intentions there is no doubt, but to steer successfully through the complications and contradictions of the tasks laid upon him required a political genius which he did not possess.

<sup>1</sup> Stepney to Harley, April 29, 1705.

<sup>2</sup> Bercsenyi to Rakoczi, May 16, 1705.

## CHAPTER VI

Kurucz's attitude towards the new reign—Fruitless efforts for peace—Desultory military operations of the Hungarians—Herbeville's campaign in the East—The convention at Szecsén and the constitution of the Hungarian Confederacy—Battle of Zsibo—The Austrians reconquer Transylvania and lose South-Western Hungary.

THE change on the throne produced no change in the political situation. Had redress for the arbitrary and oppressive acts of Leopold's reign been indeed the sole object of Rakoczi it might have been otherwise. For the new King had borne no share in these acts, and he certainly ascended the throne with the desire to make peace with his Hungarian subjects. But the struggle had outgrown these proportions. For Joseph's person Rakoczi had always professed regard and veneration, and he now made haste to renew the assurances of these feelings.<sup>1</sup> But behind the King he and the men who were with him saw his German surroundings, the aims and tendencies of his German advisers, and the history of the past hundred years. He judged the situation to be in his favour, and was not inclined to let his opportunity go by because Joseph had

<sup>1</sup> His letter to Joseph I. shortly after the latter's accession in Lombardy, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, vol. iii. p. 607.

succeeded to Leopold and Prince Salm to Count Harrach.

King Joseph had flattered himself with the hope of doing away with the foreign mediation and coming to a direct agreement with his people. He intended to keep his coronation oath and to rule according to the constitution. He offered his royal word for it, and never having done anything against the nation, felt that he had a right to see it accepted. By his order the Palatine sent open letters to all the counties informing them of the King's intentions, and inviting them to lay down their arms. For the transmission of these letters Rakoczi had to be applied to, as the greater part of the country was in his power, but he refused to receive them or the envoy who brought them because, owing to Seilern's scruples, he had not been addressed with his title of Prince.

The Imperial appeal fell flat. The leaders were not disposed to forgo any of their former demands, and the nation was as yet with them. Far from accepting Joseph's word as a sufficient guarantee, the kurucz leaders were not even willing to admit his right to the throne without further questions. In glaring contrast to his conciliatory advices of March, Bercsenyi's first impulse, on Leopold's death, was to declare the throne vacant and to provide for a regency.<sup>1</sup> It does not appear that

<sup>1</sup> "Interregnum et esse et publicari necesse et proficuum putarem."—Bercsenyi to Rakoczi, May 12, 1705; see also his letter of May 16, *Archivum* iv. 132.

Rakoczi was ready to take up the suggestion, and certainly the nation was not as yet prepared to go so far. But that the plan which was put into execution in 1707 lay nascent in the minds of the leaders from the beginning is beyond doubt. In the meantime Bercsenyi told the Palatine's secretary most emphatically that the foreign guarantee had been from the beginning, and would remain to the end, the unalterable condition for entering into a treaty.

The attempt of a direct settlement failed, and the wearisome negotiations through the foreign mediators were resumed, but the real arbitrament rested with the sword.

The troops which Heister had left in the Csallóköz were neither numerous enough nor in condition for active operations. Reinforcements had been ordered, but it took time before they could arrive, and when Count Herbeville, who had been appointed in Heister's place, took possession of his command he found the state of things as his predecessor had left it. The Hungarian leaders, therefore, were free to form their own plans. It must be owned that they made poor use of their opportunity.

It might seem on the surface that the most obvious plan would have been to attack the enfeebled remnants of Heister's army, prevent their reorganization, and eventually follow them into the enemy's country. But marching on the enemy had never been in kurucz tactics, and the last experience at Nagyszombat excluded the idea altogether from



Rakoczi's mind. On Bercsenyi's proposition the plan was adopted of transferring the main seat of war from the north-west to the region on the right bank of the Danube, which it was supposed would force the Austrians either to remain in the defensive, or to accept battle according to their enemies' choosing. All that was done, however, was the attempt to construct a bridge over the Lower Danube between Ordas and Paks. The task was entrusted to General Bottjan, together with the mission to renew the efforts for winning the Servians. Had he succeeded therein, it would have been worth more than the bridge, but although a few of their leaders lent a willing ear to his overtures, the mass did not follow, and to the end the Servians remained faithful to the Austrian cause.

Bottjan was no luckier with the bridge. While he was engaged with his work, Daniel Esterhazy had been posted with about 10,000 men to guard the construction. But when General Glöckelsperg arrived to attack him with a force of about the same number—of which, however, only 3600 were German regulars—he at once retired without a stroke.<sup>1</sup> Bottjan did his best, but in vain; he was severely wounded, his fort taken, all his labour brought to nought.

The plan of a Trans-Danubian campaign from

<sup>1</sup> Thus belying Bercsenyi's recommendation that he would sooner fight out of turn than run away without rhyme or reason. Des Alleurs is particularly bitter in his comments on Daniel Esterhazy. See his letter to Louis XIV. of June 27.

Paks having failed, Rakoczi, after some hesitation, abandoned it altogether and moved westward towards Vacz to effectuate a junction with Bercsenyi. It was the middle of July when the two leaders met, bringing their united forces up to about 30,000 men. But in the meanwhile the Austrian reinforcements had also largely arrived, and the troops in the Csaloköz numbered upwards of 20,000. The power of the offensive lay with them, and the next military developments depended not upon what Rakoczi or Bercsenyi would plan but upon what Herbeville would do.

The new Austrian commander was not a man of great initiative or brilliant talents. He was well advanced in years, and owed his appointment mainly to the circumstance that the two Generals whom Joseph would have best liked to entrust with the command in Hungary, Starhemberg, and Rabutin, could for the time not be spared, the one from Italy, the other from Transylvania. But he obeyed instructions, was amenable to advice, and the plan for his campaign was laid out for him in Vienna. The Imperial Board of War had come to the conviction that a merely defensive campaign on the Austrian borders, with occasional blows against Hungarian forces, would never suffice to crush the kurucz movement, and they had decided to transfer their operations at last into the enemy's stronghold in Eastern Hungary and Transylvania. There Rakoczi had made undisturbed progress since the

beginning of the war. During the whole year of 1704 the Imperial Court had not been able to send any succour in men to Rabutin and very little money. That he had been able to maintain himself at all was mainly owing to the two facts that the Saxon population of Transylvania was more in sympathy with the Imperial than with the kurucz cause, and that the forces of the latter, in spite of their numerical superiority, were not trained and equipped to reduce fortified places otherwise than by famine. But in 1705 Rabutin held only Hermanstadt, Brasso, and Fogaras, and the temper of his troops was sorely tried by want and arrears in payment. In the preceding summer the garrisons of Bistritz and Hunyad had capitulated, and the regiment of Thürheim in Kövar openly mutinied. Now Forgach, to whom Rakoczi, after the capitulation of Szathmar, had given the command in Transylvania, took Medgyes, Deva, and the Pass of Vörös Torony. In the vast plains of Lower Hungary, on both sides of the Tibiscus, the Servians were the sole supporters of the Austrian cause. The fortified places of Arad and Nagyvarad still held out, but they, especially the latter, were sorely pressed, and it was now decided that Herbeville should bring them relief, and, marching through the plains, come to the succour of Rabutin.

The plan of campaign was formed in May, but many circumstances delayed its execution. The Danish auxiliaries who were to form part of Herbeville's army did not arrive before the middle

of July. These men had no quarrel with Hungary, no more than the Hessians in English pay had with the Americans seventy years later. In the light of the twentieth century it seems incongruous that the Danish Government should have sacrificed the bones of its grenadiers in a cause with which it had no concern, but the powers that were in those days had few scruples in this regard, and the King of Denmark being the Emperor's ally lent him his troops according to their mutual convenience. Then it also took time before the money and the provisions necessary for the expedition were sent into the Csalloköz. Then there was the relief of Lipotvar, which was near, and where provisions were again beginning to run short. And, finally, there were Herbeville's own objections and hesitations. For two months Bercsenyi had been anxiously observing him, trying to guess whither he would turn, making plans with Rakoczi when and where to attack him. In July the Hungarian chiefs decided on a diversion, and sent Anthony Esterhazy and Ocskay with about 8000 men on a new raid into Moravia. Herbeville thereupon ordered Glöckelsperg back from the east into Csalloköz, but these measures were disapproved in Vienna and the orders to Glöckelsperg countermanded. At the beginning of August the Imperial commander started at last from his island camp to the relief of Lipotvar, taking his way straight north through an open pass formed by the two branches of the river Vagh. There

Rakoczi had set a trap for him, and if the execution of the Hungarian plan had come up to its conception, Herbeville might then and there have met with the fate of Ritschan at Szomolyan. But neither Bercsenyi, who was to attack the enemy from the front, nor Geczy, who was to fall upon him from the rear, nor Anthony Esterhazy, who was to resist his passage of the Dud Vagh, fulfilled the task which was expected from them, and Herbeville carried out his purpose in safety. He did not care, however, to return by the same dangerous road, and from Lipotvar turned west to Nagyszombat. Rakoczi followed his march on a parallel line south of him. His object was to cut off the Austrian commander from his provisions and reserves in the Csalloköz or to force an engagement in the open country, where his superiority in numbers and his cavalry could be put to the best advantage. The two armies came in sight of each other at Cziffer, a village near Nagyszombat, when Herbeville, as if to avoid battle, changed his direction and drew back into the hills of the White Mountains. Rakoczi would have been well contented to leave him there, but his officers thought they knew better, and grumbled at his missing his opportunity to pursue the fleeing enemy for the sake of what they called French rules. He yielded against his better judgment and marched on the enemy. An encounter ensued at Pudmericz on August 11, wherein the kurucz army was beaten. It was not

a very important engagement,<sup>1</sup> and Herbeville's announcement of it as a great victory was severely criticized in Vienna. The losses were small on either side, the Austrians did not pursue nor the kurucz troops disperse as was their wont after a defeat. So little were they disorganized or their ardour damped that only a week later Rakoczi could order a new invasion of Moravia and Lower Austria on a greater scale than ever before. But his main object was defeated and Herbeville returned safely to Csalloköz, from whence he was now to start on his Eastern campaign.

Already, before the battle of Pudmericz, Szirmay, coming from Pozsony, had told Rakoczi of the Austrian intention to come to Rabutin's succour. The Prince thought the idea chimerical, and rather believed that Herbeville's next move would be the reconquest of Ersek Ujvar. To divert the latter therefrom was one of his motives for sending a force of 10,000 to 12,000 men into the hereditary provinces and entrusting their command to Berc-

<sup>1</sup> Herbeville had marched out of Csalloköz with about 10,000 to 12,000 men, Rakoczi's army numbered from 25,000 to 30,000. In his letters to Karolyi and Forgach, written immediately after the battle, he gives his losses in dead as 60 and those of the enemy as 150 men. Herbeville's letter put his own losses at 200 and those of the kurucz at 400 men besides 200 prisoners. He tells that he has captured four field-guns; Rakoczi admits having lost two. The Austrian accounts are very meagre on the battle, Rakoczi's narration, on which Szalay and Thaly have built (*Histoire des Révolutions*, vol. ii. p. 78-81), not very clear. It becomes, however, evident from the latter that the Hungarians lost the battle chiefly through the inability of their generals to manœuvre their troops on the hilly and thickly wooded ground. That the kurucz soldiers gave a good account of themselves is proved by Pálffy's letter to Prince Eugen, wherein he says that the insurgents can be considered a rabble no longer, and that they have learned the art of war (*Feldzüge des Prinz Eugen*, vol. vii. p. 440).

senyi, to the latter's utmost disgust. The other was inspired by the news coming from Moravia, where a mutiny had broken out amongst the local militia in Znaim, and where it was hoped that the appearance of a considerable Hungarian force under a general of renown might lead to a serious uprising. Neither of Rakoczi's hopes was fulfilled. The mutiny had been quelled before Bercsenyi had crossed the frontier, and his inflammatory manifestos remained without response. On the other hand the Imperial Board of War did not allow themselves to be turned from their settled resolution, although some of the most influential men in Vienna, like Prince Adam Liechtenstein and the Prime Minister himself, Prince Salm, complained loudly against the abandonment of flourishing provinces near by for the sake of Transylvania, which had already been considered as lost.<sup>1</sup> Nothing resulted from this newraid but frightful devastation, and Bercsenyi's orders to respect the life and property of the inhabitants were no more heeded by his troops than were his letters and patents by the Moravians.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Stepney's letter to Harley, August 26, 1705. He attributed the decision to General Count Schlick, Commissary General in Herbeville's army.

<sup>2</sup> "I own my soul shudders from this expedition, I take no pleasure in the gain," Bercsenyi to Rakoczi, August 18. And on the same day: "I have received your letter and am sorry to have incurred your displeasure, but this expedition does not suit me. I see nothing to be gained by it. . . . If you order it I will even go to Prague if I only knew what for, if there was somebody there with whom I could unite. . . . The object of our diversion was to turn them away from Ujvar; thus gained, what is the use of drawing the enemy on my neck?"

"Against my most stringent orders, soldiers, peasants, tartars, disperse like ants over the country. You can see their fires two miles off; I spoil my hands and my legs thrashing and kicking officers and men" (August 21).

The Danes had arrived, Schlick had finished his preparations, and Herbeville started at last with 19 battalions of infantry, 9 companies of grenadiers, and 10 regiments of cavalry, a force of about 16,500 men. On the 25th of August he was in Komarom, on September 3 in Buda. There he found and distributed his provisions for the long march, and was besides reinforced by about 1200 dragoons and 2000 to 3000 Servian levies. There he also learned the news of Bercsenyi's great raid, and if left to himself would have returned to his former opinion to attack the kurucz forces from the north, where his presence would have protected the Austrian provinces, and where the country offered the means for the support of his troops.

The real difficulties of his task lay not in the distance to be traversed, long as it was,<sup>1</sup> nor did they come from any resistance the kurucz troops might offer in open battle. They lay in the nature of the country which he had to pass in summer heat. The country between the Danube and the Tibiscus was then a sandy, dry, and arid plain, where water was scarce, where the inhabited places were few and far between, and where it was easy for the defender to remove all necessaries of life from the grasp of

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"I blush at our incapacity owing to our men's disobedience. . . . Yesterday I saw myself thirty fires. . . . They are such damned curs, they burn all the rich villages, they do not even plunder."

All his letters from August 17 to August 31 from this expedition are couched in the same tone, *vide* Thaly, *Archivum*, vol. viii. pp. 674-696.

<sup>1</sup> The whole distance which separated Herbeville in the Csallóköz from Rabutin in Hermannstadt was about 300 miles (455 kilometers).



the invader. The command in this region was entrusted to Bottjan, whose orders were to lay the country waste before the enemy and to harass him by surprises and skirmishes. He could not do him much direct harm, having only about 6000 hussars under him; but Herbeville's progress was slow, and his troops suffered a great deal from want. He had left Buda on September 16, on the 24th he had arrived at Nagy Körös, and on the 30th he had intended to cross the Tibiscus at Szolnok. But the floating bridges, which had been sent down the Danube and were to come up the Tibiscus, had not arrived. The delay made him change his dispositions, and he finally crossed the river much farther south at Algyő, a little above Szeged, on October 10. The summer heat was over, but otherwise the conditions on the left side of the Tibiscus were the same as before. There Karolyi held command. His tactics were the same as Bottjan's, but he was better seconded by the inhabitants; for whereas Nagy Körös and Kecskemet had disobeyed Rakoczi's orders of evacuation, Herbeville's troops found even the large town of Debreczen completely deserted. But he arrived at last in good order before Nagyvarad, easily dispersed the blockading force, and revictualled the fortress for nine months. On November 3 he resumed his farther march towards Transylvania.

While the Austrians were still pursuing their march between the Danube and the Tibiscus, the

Hungarians had given themselves a political constitution. Already, at the beginning of July, Rakoczi had issued letters calling a national assembly to meet at Szecsen, in the county of Nograd, on September 1. For two years he had exercised supreme power, made war and treated for peace, without any other title than the one derived from the tide of events and the voluntary adherence of his countrymen. A diet alone could give formal sanction to his authority; and if hitherto he had hesitated to convoke one, it was from fear that its meeting might be the signal for the outbreak of internal dissensions.

There were two causes threatening danger in this regard. The one was the question of the peace negotiations, the other the settlement of the disputes between Protestants and Catholics.

There was a strong current for a peaceful agreement with Austria even amongst Rakoczi's most faithful adherents. Already in the previous autumn, and again in the spring, he had received signs of it.<sup>1</sup> The events which had happened since—the change on the throne, the recall of Heister, the barrenness of the kurucz military operations, the efforts and intrigues of the Court's emissaries, of Szirmay, Visa, and Okolicsanyi—had strengthened it. It showed itself in the army. In an impassioned

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 203 and 244 above. In all these months, from May to August 1705, Des Alleurs informed the King that a great part of the nation desired peace, and that even all the generals were for it if Transylvania could be obtained for Rakoczi.

harangue addressed to his soldiers in his camp at Cyömrö, Rakoczi had hurled the most violent reproaches against any one who could prefer an ignoble peace to further sacrifices.<sup>1</sup> It would be a bitter blow to him should the nation's representatives pronounce in this sense.<sup>2</sup> But he felt that by hesitating any further to convoke them he would only strengthen the arguments of his enemies, who accused him of prolonging the war for his own ends.<sup>3</sup>

The disputes between the confessions did not spring from any intensity of religious feeling, but from material interests, and were of old standing. There were ninety churches which, with the land and revenues pertaining to them, were, according to the Treaty of Linz, to be returned to the Protestants. As long as the Austrians ruled in Hungary the non-execution of this stipulation was one of the many grievances against them. It was natural that the Protestants of the northern counties, who had been amongst Rakoczi's first supporters, should expect satisfaction from him; and already at the first conference at Gyöngyös they had come forward with their claims.<sup>4</sup> The question had become more acute at the second conference in August 1704, when the deputies of the eleven north-western counties insisted stubbornly on their rights, and threatened to accept the Emperor's offers if

<sup>1</sup> See the Hungarian original in Szalay, vol. vi. p. 249, and the French translation in *Histoire des Révolutions*, vol. v. pp. 254-256.

<sup>2</sup> See his letter to Vestes, July 29, 1705, Fiedler, vol. i. pp. 282.

<sup>3</sup> See *Histoire des Révolutions*, vol. iii. p. 82.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 152 above.

justice was not done. But the question was not as simple as it looked, for in the sixty years which had intervened the people of many of those parishes had returned to the old faith, and the restitution would have involved an injustice on them. Rakoczi had to manage both sides and to take into consideration the feelings of the Pope, who at that time had a political quarrel of his own with the Imperial Court. With the assistance of his Protestant councillors, Vaj and Ottlyk, he had succeeded in appeasing the turbulent petitioners, but he had given them a formal promise that their demands should be laid before the next diet and its decisions carried out.

What to expect from the diet and how to manage it had been Bercsenyi's constant preoccupation,<sup>1</sup> and during their journey from Nyitra to Szecsen he had endeavoured to come to an understanding with Rakoczi about it. But the latter had a firm belief in his hold over his countrymen, and declared himself resolved to come before the assembly as a plain citizen and leave everything to its decision. Events proved that they were both right. Rakoczi's faith was not deceived, but without a little management the diet might have run riot and confusion ensued.

All Hungary was not, and could not have been, represented at Szecsen, neither geographically nor socially. The country on the right bank of the

<sup>1</sup> See his letter to Rakoczi of April 22, *Archivum R.I.* vol. iv. pp. 467-479.

Danube was still in Austrian power, the counties in the south between the two great rivers were inhabited by Servians or traversed by Herbeville, two counties in the south-east still belonged to the Turks, and Transylvania was a separate country which had its own diet. Of the sixty-three counties which constitute modern Hungary only the twenty-five northern ones stretching from the Austrian to the Transylvanian frontier sent their deputies to the convention. The social classes which held political power in the Hungary of the eighteenth century were the clergy, the nobility, the gentry, and the inhabitants of the free towns. The former still held aloof from the kurucz movement. Archbishop Szechenyi was at Szecsen, but only as a spectator and as an intermediary for peace. Bishop Thelekessy was there, and four titular bishops of not much importance, deputies of the Jesuits and some other orders, and a large number of the lower secular clergy. Of the nobility but few had come; counts there were nine, barons twenty-two—amongst the former Bercsenyi, Forgach, and three Esterhazys. But of the great families of Palffy, Batthyany, Erdody, Kohary, Illeshazy, and Kery no representatives had appeared. The bulk of those present were gentry whom Rakoczi had summoned to come in person, and not by deputies, as from the diet they would have to march on the enemy.

In its outward appearance the convention resembled a medieval gathering of warlike barons and knights much more than a modern Parliamentary

assembly. It was held in the open, under tents<sup>1</sup> and under arms. Near Rakoczi's and Bercsenyi's tents their grenadiers stood as a bodyguard; while in order to protect the assembly against Herbeville's approach, and maybe against itself, a corps had been posted not far away, between Vacz and Hatvan. It was all very well for Rakoczi to divest himself of all authority and step before the convention as a mere private individual, but his generals understood it otherwise, and did not mean to meet the deputies on an equal footing. When, in the course of a debate on Protestant revindications, Alexander Platthy, a deputy from Thurocz, made a violent speech which seemed directed against Bercsenyi, the latter interrupted him with the question whether he knew to whom he was speaking. Platthy, who was not deficient in pluck, still did not take up the challenge directly, but answered that he was speaking to the country, but also that he was doing so in the name of all its Protestant citizens. Whereupon Bercsenyi fell into a towering rage and cursed him roundly, Rakoczi tried to appease them, and Forgach made jokes.

But if there were many who could not come and others who did not want to come, the convention, such as it was, was a fair representation of the men who had stood for the kurucz cause hitherto, and meant to hold to it in the future. It may well be

<sup>1</sup> Curiously enough, they had been made by a Viennese artisan. Archbishop Szechenyi, who shortly before had wanted some white silk, linen, and buttons, had written to Viza to bring some from Vienna.

doubted whether such an assembly of freemen could have gathered at the period anywhere else in continental Europe, save perhaps in the mountains of Switzerland, the council chamber at The Hague, or the plains of Poland.

The main question which the assembly had to consider, whether to accept the Emperor's offers or to continue the war, did not give rise to any dissensions. On its opening Rakoczi had an address read by Raday<sup>1</sup> wherein he gave an account of all that had happened, the negotiations pursued hitherto, the acceptance of the mediation of England and Holland, the letters received from Stepney and Bruyninx, and their impending arrival. He concluded by declaring that he had no wish to take the decision upon himself, that he resigned all authority, and left the issue in the hands of the convention.

The next day being Sunday, the members had leisure to talk things over amongst themselves. On the ensuing morning of Monday the gentry and deputies of the counties met alone, and resolved to follow the ordinary rules of procedure and constitute themselves as a Lower House. They elected John Radvanszky, a Protestant, for Speaker, informed Rakoczi of their proceedings, and obtained his consent. But this did not please the clergy nor the generals, who saw therein a triumph of sectarian faction and a menace to their legitimate influence.

<sup>1</sup> See the journal of the convention published by Thaly in *Rakoczi Tar*, vol. v. pp. 423-448.

With Bercsenyi as their spokesman they persuaded Rakoczi to cancel his agreement. He yielded, and explained to the convention that he had assented to the resolutions of yesterday in the belief that they had been taken by unanimous agreement. As this was not the case, he felt bound to declare them invalid, exhorted the Estates to agree amongst themselves with regard to their further procedure, and left. A row ensued, and a long debate whether the assembly was to be considered an ordinary diet or not. But Bercsenyi had now obtained the lead; he was far and away the ablest man in the convention, and alone knew whither he was driving. He explained that without doubt the Estates assembled had all the right and power of a regular diet, but as to conforming to its ordinary rules and forms, considerations of opportunity were against it. The great dignitaries of the realm were not present; without them a regular diet could not be held; if their places were filled by new men it might lead to the estrangement of some who in their hearts were for the national cause. A regular diet would also have to proceed to the election of a king, which was not advisable as long as Joseph I. declared himself willing to remedy the nation's grievances. Exceptional circumstances required exceptional measures; and, referring to the example of the Poles, he proposed that the assembly should declare itself a convention and organize a Confederacy, with an elected leader, for the re-establishment of Hungarian liberty. The proposition



was accepted, the Hungarian Confederacy sprang into being, and Rakoczi was forthwith unanimously elected its prince and leader.

The birth of the new organization was solemnly celebrated on the 20th of September. Religious services were held, prince and people bound themselves by oath in mutual covenant, and Rakoczi was, in accordance with ancient custom, triumphantly lifted high by Bercsenyi, Forgach, Anthony Esterhazy, and Csaky, amidst the shouts and acclamations of the assembled multitude. He returned the courtesy by a banquet, which was served at thirty-seven tables, and consisted of seventy-two courses, while outside the tents oxen were roasted and barrels of wine tapped for the camp and its followers.

The remaining work was finished in short time. The convention went even beyond Rakoczi's wishes, and wanted to leave not only the direction of the military operations, but of all political and financial affairs, to him, without any restriction. It was he himself who protested against such unlimited authority, and suggested the creation of a senate of twenty-four members as an advisory body for all political, and of an economic council for financial matters. The suggestion was followed; but instead of electing the senators, the convention left their designation to Rakoczi.

Discord only raised its head in religious matters, but these too were settled at last by a compromise. Restitution of property was resolved on the basis

of the actual creed of the inhabitants of the parishes, and the application of the principle left to the transactions of Rakoczi with the several counties concerned. Absolute freedom for the exercise of their religion was guaranteed to Lutherans and Calvinists, under penalties for landowners claiming the right to impose their creed on their tenants. A statute was passed restricting the Jesuits to certain places, and threatening them with banishment altogether if they did not sever their connection with their Austrian province.

Laws were further resolved on authorizing Rakoczi to proceed jointly with the Senate against counties recalcitrant or remiss in the national cause, empowering Bercsenyi to exact personal service in the army from all nobles and gentry who had stayed away from Szecsen without legitimate excuse, and branding all who would refuse the oath to the Confederacy as felons and traitors, granting indemnities to the victims of the Eperjes tribunal, restoring his confiscated estates to Tököli,<sup>1</sup> appointing three commissioners for the conclusion of an alliance with Transylvania, and authorizing Prince and Senate to appoint plenipotentiaries for the impending Peace Conference.

On the 3rd of October the convention closed its session with a solemn *Te Deum*. It cannot be denied that its members had acted wisely and well. They had compromised their own differences, given

<sup>1</sup> He had died in the meanwhile in Nicomedia, on September 13.

themselves an organization suited to the circumstances, shown trust and affection for their leader, and left the door open for an honourable agreement with their King. The creative conceptions had sprung from the fertile brain of Bercsenyi, but their investment with real life was due to the love and devotion which all felt for Rakoczi. The convention had accepted Bercsenyi's intellectual guidance, but chafed under it, and he left Szecsen with the sting of wounded ambition. It is true that he had been given first rank in the senate and appointed chief of the peace and of the Transylvanian treaty commission.<sup>1</sup> But already he had held first rank in the army, and commanded in chief wherever he was if Rakoczi was not present. His services had far outshone those of everybody else, and he might well expect to see their acknowledgment reflected in his future position. His soldiers thought so too, and felt the slight on their general as a triumph of the civilian element. When he returned into their midst they refused to take the oath to the Confederacy unless he was appointed Rakoczi's lord-lieutenant and eventual successor. But he was far too good a kurucz to let personal considerations interfere with the success of his cause, and appeased the murmurs as quickly as they had risen.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He did not accept the latter commission, and Barkoczy was chosen in his place.

<sup>2</sup> "But—I tell you on my faith—to my surprise and beyond any of my thoughts they revolted and wanted to renounce the Confederacy because some fools after their return home had spoken disparagingly of me and boasted

From Szecsen, Rakoczi went to Transylvania. More than a year had passed since his election, but as yet he had not been installed in his princely dignity as the laws and customs of the country required. The Transylvanian inauguration would have formed a fitting sequel to the acclamations at Szecsen, but the negotiations with France furnished a weightier motive for hastening it. Lewis XIV. had recognized his election, and raised his subsidies to 50,000 francs per month shortly after the death of Emperor Leopold; but otherwise he continued his policy of "blowing the horn in order to excite the pack." To Rakoczi's demands for a formal alliance he gave evasive answers. When, in August 1705, Baron Vetes,<sup>1</sup> Rakoczi's agent at the Court

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that now my authority had fallen, that I had nothing more to say, that I was a councillor like all others, and that my command as general and my person had not even been mentioned. And when I told them that indeed I was drawing pay (for the officers had said that they were not serving for copper), they only grew more enraged, and attributing these slights to the deputies of the counties, declared that they would submit to you and your authority, but felt the humiliation of their commander as their own, and would not take the oath to the Confederacy. . . . For Heaven's sake, said I, friends, there is no slight; I had wished for nothing, and nothing has been taken away from me. I also have taken the oath. Heaven forbid, said they; but if you do not want it, we want it. If his lordship should die, which God forbid, shall they appoint some one in his place, whomever they choose? . . . At last I said that I would rather die than see secession amongst ourselves. I thank you for your good intentions, but I would rather you killed me, for nobody will believe that this is not my doing. . . . Of this I wanted to inform you in submission and bitterness, for who does not know my soul will never believe that it was not my work, whereas I am ashamed of it."—Bercsenyi to Rakoczi, October 24, 1705. *Archivum*, vol. iv. pp. 711-714.

<sup>1</sup> Ladislav Kokenyedi de Vetes was the son of a country squire in the county of Szathmar, and at the outbreak of the Hungarian Revolution a captain in the Imperial army. His colonel's severity, the false news of his father's death, and chiefly a scrape into which he got, made him—according to his own story—leave the Emperor's service. When he arrived home in the autumn of 1704 he found his father not only alive but very much enraged, and not knowing which way to turn, offered his services to Rakoczi. The

of Versailles, had submitted the draught of a treaty by which France was to guarantee Transylvania's independence, Hungary's constitutional liberties, and Rakoczi's inclusion into the peace finally to be concluded with the Emperor, the French Government replied that the King's dignity forbade him to treat such matters with an informal agent, but that Des Alleurs would be instructed accordingly. The latter, however, declared that his King could not in honour conclude an alliance with the revolted subjects of another sovereign, but that he would treat with Rakoczi as Prince of Transylvania after his inauguration.<sup>1</sup> The ceremony had therefore been fixed for the autumn, and preparations made for Rakoczi's triumphal entry into Koloszvar. But Herbeville's progress had upset former combinations, and when in October Rakoczi finally went to Transylvania, it was not to complete his title by the pomp of an inaugural celebration, but to make it good by force of arms.

If the Hungarian leaders had had any doubts as

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Elector of Bavaria had at that time applied for some Hungarian officers for the instruction of his regiment of hussars. Vetes solicited and obtained the commission, was made a Bavarian lieutenant-colonel, but never did any military service. With the Elector's consent he was entrusted with Rakoczi's diplomatic negotiations at the French Court, and continued to act in this capacity from 1705 to 1712. After Rakoczi's downfall he quarrelled with him over money matters, and after having sued for and obtained his pardon from the Imperial Government, betrayed all the documents in his possession relating to his former mission into their hands. He died as field-marshal-lieutenant in the Imperial service. But if his character was that of a greedy, self-seeking adventurer, his political insight was just and clear.

<sup>1</sup> Fiedler, *Aktenstücke*, vol. I. pp. 22-25, 35-42, 282-289.

to the final object of the Austrian campaign, they had them dispelled by what they learned while still at Szecsen. Rakoczi took his measures accordingly. He was resolved to take command against Herbeville in person; Forgach had been sent in advance to finish the entrenchments at the mountain passes, where the enemy was expected; Anthony Esterhazy was to have the command of the infantry, and to come with the Prince; while Karolyi was to follow and harass the enemy in his flanks and rear.

When Rakoczi arrived at the frontier he found things in great confusion; Forgach and Pekry openly intriguing against each other. Too much weight must not be laid on these petty quarrels. Human nature is essentially the same the world over; and if the Hungarian leaders envied and spited each other, they only did what others have done before and since. The heroes of the American Revolution do not always present a picture of concord to the outside world, while the war they were waging against the rest of Europe did not prevent the leaders of the French Revolution from cutting each other's heads off, besides those of their fellow-citizens and generals. Neither did Bercsenyi's, Forgach's, Karolyi's, Pekry's, and the minor leaders' mutual jealousies and dislikes interfere with their showing a united front to the common enemy, nor with their unfaltering devotion to their common chief Rakoczi. What in the present emergency was a more serious matter was that the entrenchments in the mountain

passes were not finished, although there had been plenty of time for the work.

On the 31st of October Rakoczi had arrived in his camp at Magyar Egyregy, in the county of Szilagy, where his army numbered about 23,800 men. On the 7th of November, Herbeville, after several painful marches, arrived with about 20,000 men<sup>1</sup> at Somlyo, in the same county. The question was by which pass he would come through the mountains. These run in three parallel ranges from north to south, and according to general opinion could only be traversed by an army at Karika, or farther north at Zsibo. Rakoczi fully expected the enemy to come by Karika, which was in his straight line; but the information he received from his spies made Herbeville change his dispositions at the last moment, and he turned north to Zsibo. Even then the advantage remained with the kurucz, for Zsibo is only a few hours' distance from Egyregy whereas the Austrians had two or three days' marches to make. Pekry, Mikes, Teleky, and other Transylvanians were altogether against defending the pass, and advocated either giving battle in the open, where their cavalry could be put to use, or retreating before the enemy and letting him exhaust himself by sickness and fatigue. But Rakoczi had with him Des Alleurs and the French engineers who had planned the entrenchments and wanted to defend them. He

<sup>1</sup> Their condition is described in a letter of Count Czernin, who was with them. "We march trusting to fortune, without bread or anything. The diseases amongst us are indescribable; also amongst our horses."

decided to fight Herbeville, and placed his troops into position at Zsibo, giving, after some complimentary sparring, the command of the right wing to Des Alleurs, and of the left to Forgach; while Karolyi's orders were to attack the enemy from the rear.

The battle took place on the 11th of November. Rakoczi was behind his lines at Szurdok, and had just finished his dinner when he received the news that the enemy's left had come in sight of his right wing. He at once mounted his horse, but on his way to the front met his soldiers in full flight, and shortly afterwards Des Alleurs, who told him that everything was over, that Forgach's troops had been routed, and he himself obliged to give the order for retreat. The Frenchman's story was but too true. Herbeville had begun to attack on his left, where Des Alleurs' corps at first made a good resistance. But in the meanwhile five grenadier companies had stormed Forgach's entrenchments, and when the Austrian cavalry appeared on the heights the whole Hungarian left wing took to flight. Then the centre gave way, the right wing followed, and the rout became complete. From fifty to sixty colours and twenty-eight guns fell into the conqueror's hands.<sup>1</sup>

Zsibo was a worse defeat than either Nagys-

<sup>1</sup> The accounts of the losses on both sides vary according to the nationality of their authors. Herbeville puts the number of kurucz dead at 6000, his own at 500. Karolyi, who came to the battlefield shortly after Herbeville had left, only counted 400 dead kurucz; Forgach tells of 700; while both put the Austrian loss at 1200. The Turkish Pasha of Temesvar reported that the Hungarians had lost 4000 dead and 24 guns, the Austrians 1000 dead.



zombat or Pudmericz. The issue had never hung in the balance, there had been no misconception of orders, no defection of German auxiliaries as at the first, no untoward circumstances like the dust-storm at the second battle. It is true that Karolyi had remained inactive, and the Transylvanians were not slow in attributing the disaster to him and accusing him of treachery. Nor did they judge Forgach more leniently,<sup>1</sup> while the two Hungarian Generals complained not less bitterly of the negligence and treasonable lukewarmness of their allies. But in reality all these accusations were only the ordinary recriminations of a defeated and loosely disciplined army. Karolyi had not attacked because Herbeville had so barricaded his flanks and his rear by cars and timber that cavalry (and Karolyi had no other troops) could not approach them, and because his officers had all been against it. There had been errors in judgment and shortcomings in the execution, but the battle had been won by the fighting superiority of trained professional soldiers over a popular army.

The result of the victory was the reconquest of the greater part of Transylvania and the setting

<sup>1</sup> Pekry puts all the blame on him. From Bako in Moldavia, where he had taken refuge, he wrote on December 13 to Rakoczi: "Our country will indeed have reason to remember the command of Forgach. Once before he had lost the country beyond the Danube, now he has ruined us. . . . He has spent all his time here drinking, dancing, and in debauchery. . . . If we do not take to it better we shall never win a country, for we ought not only to consider who is who but who will make a true and useful servant. But the damnable reason of state and consideration of persons ruins us."—Thaly, *Bercsenyi, Csallad*, vol. iii. p. 472.

free of Rabutin. From the battlefield Rakoczi had retreated east to Szarnos Ujvar, but the Austrians were after him, and his troops in no condition to make another stand. Turning north, he withdrew to Hungary, and arrived safely in his own castle of Munkacs. Herbeville entered Koloszvar, where he went into winter quarters, after having met Rabutin and disposed his troops for the occupation of different parts of the country. Fear of Rabutin's vengeance reigned amongst the inhabitants. About 12,000 of them—men, women, and children—followed Rakoczi, and found refuge on his estates. Others fled to Moldavia, amongst them Pekry and Mikes.

Herbeville had done all that was expected of him. He had traversed Hungary from one end to the other, led his army safely through the plains and over the mountains, defeated the enemy in pitched battle, brought relief to Nagyvarad and Rabutin, and reconquered Transylvania. If his successes were destined to be transitory and the tide was soon to close up behind him, the fault lay not with him but with the conception which had been formed in Vienna, and which he had faithfully executed. If for the Hungarians Zsibo was a renewal of the lesson that their volunteers were no match for real soldiers in the open field, the Austrians were soon to learn again that from gaining a battle there was yet a long way to subjugating a country, and that their new success had brought them no nearer to their end.

While Rakoczi was battling in the east, his generals did not remain idle in the west. As soon as Herbeville had crossed the Tibiscus, Bercsenyi recognized that the moment had come to regain the counties beyond the Danube and unite them to the Confederacy. This, and to force the remaining Austrian troops out of Hungary, became now the main objects of all his military conceptions. His presence was needed at Nagyszombat, where the Peace Conference was soon to open ; besides, the daily routine of government lay largely in his hands during the absence of Rakoczi. But his heart and soul were in the operations beyond the Danube, and during all their continuance he never ceased to exercise a directing influence on them as well as on the organization of the newly acquired counties.

The task of invading the south-west was confided to Bottjan. He lay ill at Kecskemet when he received the orders in the middle of October to leave the further observation of Herbeville to Karolyi and to prepare for the new campaign. Besides, his troops had dispersed, as usual at this season, and he had neither clothing nor money for them. But he lost no time, and at once sent some of his lieutenants across the river to prepare the people for his arrival. On the 30th of October one of them succeeded in surprising and taking possession of the Austrian entrenchments at Foldvar. A few days later he crossed the Danube himself, and on November 11, on the day when

the battle of Zsibo was fought, took the important fort of Simonytorna by storm. From thence he proceeded north towards Tata and Neszmely to meet and co-operate with Bercsenyi.

The Austrians had only a small force to oppose this new invasion—about 6000 men, all told; but of these only a few were regular soldiers—two regiments of cuirassiers, and 800 infantry. The rest were frontier troops, Croatian levies, and Styrian militia. Palfy, who was in command, had to reckon not only with Bottjan's but also with Bercsenyi's army, which by the end of October had again swollen to 24,000 men. Twice the Imperial commander had advanced against Bottjan's lieutenants, but each time he had returned, fearing the fall of Pozsony or an inroad into Moravia. In the meantime he saw his ancestral castle of Biebersburg (Vöröskő) besieged by Ocskay, and, unable to come to its assistance, applied through Princess Rakoczi to her husband to have it saved from wanton destruction. Rakoczi listened to the appeal, and gave orders to raise the siege.<sup>1</sup>

Far from discouraging Bercsenyi, the news of Zsibo only stirred him to greater exertions. He and the people around him had not believed that Herbeville would succeed in forcing his entrance

<sup>1</sup> Ocskay had begun the siege on October 5, Rakoczi's counter-orders arrived on the 19th. He had left Szechen on the 8th, and by Eger, Szerencs, and Tokaj had gone towards the Tibiscus, which he crossed at Nyiergyhaza on the 15th. His wife's letters with Palfy's request must have reached him on this journey, and his answer reached Bercsenyi in a remarkably short time.

into Transylvania,<sup>1</sup> and Karolyi's letter announcing the defeat, which he received on November 19, came as a bitter blow. But in the first letter which he wrote to the Prince he assured him that he would repay the loan to the enemy with interest,<sup>2</sup> and his performance was as good as his promise. On the 28th he saw Bottjan and concerted with him about the measures for completing the conquest of the Trans-Danubian region. In the meanwhile he kept the news from Transylvania secret, and when at last the Imperial Government and the world at large learned of Herbeville's victory, the country, on the mastery of which the Austrians had from the beginning laid the greatest weight, had passed completely into kurucz power, and save in the fortresses the Emperor had not a battalion standing in Western Hungary.<sup>3</sup>

Reinforced by some regiments of Bercsenyi's army, Bottjan had continued his advance west and taken the fort of Papa. Its commander fell in the

<sup>1</sup> "The campaign in Transylvania naturally formed the subject of daily conversation in Nagyszombat, where the mediators were assembled. Archbishop Szechenyi and Szirmay had vowed that they would shave their Hungarian beards if Herbeville succeeded in entering Transylvania"—Bercsenyi to Rakoczi, November 7, *Archivum R.I.* vol. iv. p. 731.

<sup>2</sup> "I will cause such confusion to the Germans, they will estimate it higher than Transylvania, if only your person remains safe" (Bercsenyi to Rakoczi, November 19, *Archivum*, vol. iv. p. 738); and, "I shall take out of Austria what they have dragged away from Transylvania."—Bercsenyi to Karolyi, November 22, *Rakoczi Tar*, vol. ii. p. 122.

<sup>3</sup> The first news of Zsibo came to Vienna on December 8 through a messenger sent by the Commander of Arad, who had received a report of the battle from the Pasha of Temesvar. Herbeville had sent his son-in-law, Count Draskovics, to Vienna to announce the victory; but he only arrived there about Christmas, bringing the Marquis de Bellegarde, who was taken prisoner in the battle, with him.—Stepney to Harley, December 8 and 23, State Paper Office, Germany, pp. 185, 416, and 426.

defence; of its German garrison about 400 took service in the kurucz army. Kőszeg, renowned in Hungarian history through its successful resistance against the mighty Soliman, was stormed by Bottjan's lieutenants Bezeregy, Ebeczky, and Kisfaludy. Pálffy, fearing to leave his basis, had taken his position at Magyar Ovar, while Hannibal Heister stood with some Croatian levies near the Styrian frontier at St. Gotthard. There he was attacked by Bezeregy, his troops routed, he himself obliged to take refuge in Count Batthiány's castle of Szalonak. Pálffy retreated across the frontier to Bruck in Austria, where Bercsenyi intended to shut him in. Soprony alone held out, and on Christmas Eve Bottjan laid siege to it; but neither his bombardments nor his storming attacks could overcome the stubborn resistance of its small garrison and armed citizens, and after seventeen days he was obliged to abandon the attempt.

Considering the insufficiency of the Austrian forces, Bottjan's campaign may not rank high as a military achievement; but the fact that it had been undertaken after the reverses in the east, and the way in which it was carried out, surely argues for the strength and stubbornness of the national movement. As for Bottjan himself, he, like Herbeville, had done all that was expected of him—yea, even more, for he had not only overrun, but won a country. Unlike Karolyi, he had gained the hearts of its inhabitants and inspired them with confidence.

He kept strict discipline amongst his troops, forbade all looting and plundering, and ordered them to treat all inhabitants alike, whether they were Hungarian, German, or Croatian, as long as they would not oppose the national cause. The counties took the oath to the Confederacy, and their levies flocked to the kurucz standards, where they were mustered into the regular regiment, receiving pay and clothing. Henceforth they formed a new and powerful addition to Rakoczi's forces, who, on the 30th December, wrote to Lewis XIV. that by dispensation of Providence he had lost one country but gained another, and with it an increase of 12,000 men to his army.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fiedler, *Aktenstücke*, band ii. p. 456.

## CHAPTER VII

Further efforts of England and Holland and the difficulties they encounter on both sides—Rakoczi's senate and council at Miskolcz—Hungarian finances—The military situation in the winter of 1706—The armistice.

THE peace negotiations had been continued during the whole summer and autumn, but the only persons who had them seriously at heart were Stepney and Bruyninx.

After the failure of his direct appeal to the nation Emperor Joseph had renewed his father's acceptance of the Anglo-Dutch mediation. Early in July Rakoczi had likewise accepted it formally. But neither side was eager to come to business. Rakoczi referred every decision to the impending diet of Szecsen, and the Austrian statesmen were far more interested in Herbeville's campaign than in the messages which they sent or received through Szechenyi and the mediators.

Towards the end of August Lord Sunderland and Count Rechteren arrived in Vienna, and from the outset augured ill of the success of their mission. What they saw in Vienna, as well as what they heard from Hungary, convinced them



that both sides would rather decide their quarrel by arms than by treaty.<sup>1</sup> The Emperor's Ministers insisted on a preliminary declaration from the Hungarians which should put the hereditary of the crown and the abolition of King Andrew's Decree out of all question. The kurucz leaders retorted by asking for a preliminary assurance that no infringement of their constitutional rights was intended, and that hereditary did not mean absolute power. Hopeless as these discussions were, the irritation and distrust engendered by them were augmented by the way in which the proposition for an armistice was put forth.

Still the machinery of the mediation was put into motion and, although with rubs and hitches, made progress. The Imperial Court declared its willingness to hold a new conference, appointed Count Wratislaw and Archbishop Szechenyi as commissioners, and Nagyszombat (Tyrnavia) as the place of meeting. Rakoczi accepted the proposition, named a commission of seven members with Bercsenyi at their head, and fixed the date of the meeting for the 27th of October. If each side distrusted the other, if neither believed in the result of the conference, both were equally anxious to make a show of their conciliatory disposition. The Austrians were obliged to do so out of consideration for their allies, and Rakoczi because he

<sup>1</sup> Ten days after his arrival in Vienna Sunderland asked for his recall. See his letter to Harley, September 9.

understood the temper of his nation, and because he wanted to exercise pressure on Lewis XIV. There is no doubt that his followers at that time were passionately devoted to him, but it is equally certain that their majority were in favour of peace, if only it could be made sure and solid.<sup>1</sup>

Sunderland, Stepney, Rechteren, and Bruyninx set out on their journey from Vienna on the 26th of October, and two days later arrived at Nagyszombat, where Bercsenyi was already waiting for them. He was eager to show every mark of attention to the "sea-wonders," as he called them, and to display all possible pomp and ceremony in their honour. Squadrons of hussars in parade uniform, gala coaches with six horses and outriders, Bercsenyi's household officers, and finally Senator Gerhard and Bishop Pyber met them on the road; the town was decorated, houses had been fitted up for their convenience, and banquets were awaiting them. But when they came to speak of the object

<sup>1</sup> The despatches and letters of Des Alleurs to Lewis XIV. and Torcy of that time are full of complaints and fears about the desire of Rakoczi's generals and troops to come to peace. They have never been printed, but they are in the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France at the Quay d'Orsay, where I have read them. His zeal for his master's interests seems to have completely blinded his judgment, not only with regard to the true interests of Hungary in the struggle, but also as to the character and aims of the kuruc leaders. He even accuses Bercsenyi of only having his private interests at heart, and of being ready to come to an agreement with Austria, even at the expense of Rakoczi and Hungary. He gives, however, not the shadow of a proof for this assertion, which is belied by Bercsenyi's conduct at Nagyszombat and his private correspondence with Rakoczi and Karolyi. Des Alleurs's own endeavours were mainly directed towards augmenting the distrust of the Hungarians against Austria, and he again and again represented to Rakoczi the absolute necessity of obtaining the possession of Transylvania as the only safe guarantee against the future vengeance of the Imperial Court.

of their mission they found that Bercsenyi had no desire or intention to make peace, and made not the least disguise about it. In reality he judged that the Emperor's Ministers had urged the mediators to go to Nagyszombat in order to get rid of them, and as dilatory tactics suited his own purpose, he adopted them with a vengeance. The mediators saw that for the present their task was hopeless, and that all they could do was to spin out the negotiations, trusting to time and circumstances for a change. Sunderland judged that for this purpose his presence was superfluous, and after a week's stay returned to Vienna, where the Duke of Marlborough was then expected, and then went back with him to England, leaving the continuation of the negotiations to Stepney and the two Dutchmen.

It was the Austrian Government who had proposed Nagyszombat for the meeting of the conference, but now, when their proposition had been accepted, they feared that their plenipotentiaries would be at a disadvantage in a kurucz town, and wished that they should remain in Pozsony, while the Hungarians might remove to Bazin, and the mediators reside at St. George, about half-way between the two towns. Bercsenyi at once refused to move from Nagyszombat, but made no objection to the Austrians remaining in Pozsony. So it was settled that the two commissions should sit in the two towns about thirty

miles distant, and the unfortunate mediators travel between them.

The negotiations thus begun lasted till the end of July of next year, but many months had to pass before an earnest attempt for an agreement was made and the crucial point between the two sides touched. Objections were raised on formal points, theoretical assertions put forward in a spirit of cavil, and evidently for no other purpose but that of delay. At first Bercsenyi found fault with Stepney's credentials, then with the wording of the Emperor's acceptance of the mediation. When he had received satisfaction on these points he fell back on the preliminary declarations with regard to the meaning of heredity, and sent to the mediators two long and intricate state papers on the question.<sup>1</sup> Inwardly he chafed at the necessity of having to lose his time over nothing when he might so much better employ it in camp,<sup>2</sup> and whenever he rejoined his troops, which he frequently did, the mediators had nobody to speak to, for the other commissioners were mere puppets, and would not have dared to give an opinion in his absence.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These Memoranda are dated from the 20th and 28th of December 1705, and are printed in the first volume of *Histoire des Révolutions*. On their receipt Bruyninx wrote to Stepney that he was surprised by their spirit of cavil and chicane, and the latter replied by calling them captions and unintelligible (*Archivum Rak.*, part ii. vol. ii. p. 300).

<sup>2</sup> "I regret the days which I spend here idly breaking my head over nothing."—Bercsenyi to Rakoczi, October 28, 1705.

<sup>3</sup> "He is the oracle, the others are only cuckolds."—Bruyninx to Stepney, January 18, 1706.

When it came to haggling over forms and expressions or delaying decisions, the Austrian council was fully a match for the kurucz leaders. It found fault with the term "aggrieved party" which Bruyninx had employed with regard to the Hungarians, it harped on the difference between repairing, restoring, and reintegrating the laws, and it was as obstinate about refusing the preliminary declaration as the other side was in insisting on it. But, in reality, the most influential persons in Vienna were inclining for peace,<sup>1</sup> only that their desire to conclude it was warped by the hope to enforce it. They hesitated and delayed as long as they hoped for decisive results from Herbeville's operations, and made unacceptable propositions for a truce, suiting their convenience but not the military situation. At the same time they renewed their efforts to come to a direct understanding with the two kurucz leaders. Princess Rakoczi<sup>2</sup> was treated with marked distinction by the Empress,<sup>3</sup> and Count Wratislaw's visits at her

<sup>1</sup> The Imperial council was nowise harmonious and united. Its most influential members at that time were Prince Salm, Prince Eugen, Counts Wratislaw and Sinzendorf. Salm hated Prince Eugen and Wratislaw, but in spite of his opposition the latter had been entrusted by the Emperor with the chief management of Hungarian affairs. Wratislaw was decidedly for peace if reasonable conditions could be obtained. See his letter to King Charles of July 5, 1705.

<sup>2</sup> The Princess had already in Emperor Leopold's reign been allowed to go about without any restraint in Vienna, and to enjoy the privileges of her rank and position. Frecht's *Mémoires sur la Cour de Vienne*, Cologne, 1705, pp. 325-327, contain some notices about her life there.

<sup>3</sup> "My poor wife writes that the Empress has sent for her, and in an indirect way has suggested her visit here in order to accelerate the treaty, from which I conclude that either the Danes are very few in number or that they do not trust in them."—Rakoczi to Bercsenyi, July 3, 1705.

house became more and more frequent.<sup>1</sup> Szirmay was employed to approach Bercsenyi, and although we have no direct evidence as to the offers made, it seems most probable that the prospect of the Palatine's office was held out to him.<sup>2</sup>

Rakoczi's mind at that time was made up to insist on Transylvania. He knew, or he felt, that this condition would never be willingly conceded, and therefore had no belief in the result of the negotiations. Above everything else he wanted to remain in close touch with the nation who had confided her destiny to him, but whose determination to continue the war at all hazard seemed doubtful.<sup>3</sup> To ascertain

<sup>1</sup> "I am more and more convinced that Szirmay has secret orders. He is in continuous correspondence with Wratlaw, who pays frequent visits to Mme Rakoczi" (Stepney to Bruynaux, December 22, 1705).

<sup>2</sup> It was the general belief in the Hungarian camp that if peace was concluded Bercsenyi would be made Palatine of the realm (Des Alleurs to Torcy, April 20, 1706). Bercsenyi had always warned Rakoczi against putting too much faith in French promises, and to insist on a formal treaty. Des Alleurs had to work in the opposite direction, and feeling Bercsenyi's influence to be against him, suspected his attitude at Nagyszombat, wrote to Lewis XIV., and told Rakoczi that Bercsenyi was mainly pursuing his private advantages. The mediators, on the other hand, were jealous of anything which looked like leaving them aside, and noticed with displeasure Szirmay's private interviews with Bercsenyi and his subsequent reception in Vienna by the Emperor and Count Wratlaw. There is, however, not the slightest evidence that Bercsenyi at any time contemplated severing his cause from that of Rakoczi. There is no doubt that the Court flattered itself at the time with the idea of winning Bercsenyi over. Emperor Joseph had asked Szirmay in December when Bercsenyi would come over, and Princess Rakoczi wrote that she would only remain in Vienna until this event had happened. See Bercsenyi's letter to Rakoczi of December 20, 1705. And on February 25, after Bercsenyi had left Munkacs, Des Alleurs wrote that he had made the "false" confidence to Rakoczi as to how the Imperial Court had offered him the Palatinate and 50,000 thalers if he would bring about the pacification of the realm. The particular bitterness with which Bercsenyi was regarded in Vienna after the failure of the negotiations seems also to prove that by lending his ear to Szirmay's offers he had only wished to draw him out as to the Court's intentions.

<sup>3</sup> "The new Emperor shows himself more inclined to peace. Whether the country will accept it or not I cannot tell, but if I had my wish as to continuing the affairs of the country according to my understanding, I would put small faith in their promises."—Rakoczi to Tokoli in July 1705.

its attitude and to strengthen his hands he called a conference of his Senate and Council to Miskolcz in January, where the peace conditions were to be discussed<sup>1</sup> and several matters referring to the administrative organization of the Confederacy, especially its finances, attended to.

In Szecsen Rakoczi had left everything to the convention, and the latter had returned the compliment by leaving everything to him. It was not likely that the senators and councillors in Miskolcz, whom he had himself appointed, would take a different attitude. Desirous as they were for a cessation of the struggle,<sup>2</sup> they were ready to leave the

<sup>1</sup> On January 6 Des Alleurs had a long conversation with Rakoczi at Tokaj, about which he wrote to Torcy: "The person I have at Nagyszombat writes that the Court of Vienna have an inconceivable desire for peace . . . but at the same time the Emperor has given to understand that he cannot cede Transylvania, but that in exchange he would join two or three counties to the estates of Rakoczi, which would be erected into a principality. . . . This gave me occasion to tell the Prince that if this rumour was true and would be realised, I would think him very much exposed to the vengeance of the House of Austria. . . . The Prince replied . . . that he had put his private interests into the hands of the Confederacy and the senators, who would assemble on the 25th and decide on the propositions of peace. To their resolutions he would be obliged to submit himself, having always declared that he would consent to whatever the country would see fit to adopt. . . . He also said that in case he should be obliged to accept the Emperor's offers, he would put himself in a position not to fear the Court of Vienna by fortifying his places. . . . I answered that he ought not to flatter himself with this, as the Court would pick a German quarrel to invade his home, and that magnanimity has its limits. . . . An hour later he called me back, and told me that he had thought over what I had told him, and come to the determination not to yield on his just pretensions to Transylvania."

Des Alleurs was suspecting all the time that Bercsenyi would yield on Transylvania, but already, on November 7, he had written to Rakoczi that Transylvania was the chief question, and expressed his astonishment that the Court will not yield on the point, together with his hope that it will be forced to do so.

<sup>2</sup> It was from Miskolcz that Des Alleurs wrote on February 3 that the whole realm is in favour of peace, and ten days later he complains that he is looked askance at by the Hungarians because they accuse him of thwarting their wishes for peace. Still he writes at the same time that the Hungarians are

decision of the conditions to the Prince, the more so as those he wished to insist upon responded to their own way of looking on things. Distrust of Austria, her statesmen and assurances, was deep and general in Hungary, and hence the determination to obtain for the future peace a stronger safeguard than a mere treaty. The strongest and surest seemed the return to the former state of things in Transylvania. The resolutions of the assembly were framed accordingly. The Senate declared its willingness to continue the negotiations and to instruct the commissioners in the name of the Confederacy, but the instructions were drawn up in accordance with Rakoczi's suggestions, and demanded the guarantee of Sweden and Prussia and the cession of Transylvania.

Less serious, but more annoying, were the difficulties the mediators had to contend with on the other side. There was a lack of unity in the Imperial Council which produced not only delays and hesitations, but made its decisions seem contradictory. On one side the Austrians were treating with the Hungarians as from power to power, on the other they fell back to their habit of looking upon them as rebels and malcontents. The Emperor had enhanced the lustre of his commission by appointing the Cardinal Archbishop of Osnabruck, a prince of Lorraine, as its head and by adding Counts Illeshazy and Lamberg to it, and Wratismaw had

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resolved not to make peace without Transylvania and without obtaining satisfaction on the point of heredity.



written to the mediators that the Court had resolved to proceed in the negotiations with all the forms in use amongst nations.<sup>1</sup> But when towards the middle of January the Imperial Council gave its reply to the Hungarian demands about the preliminary assurances, it was couched in such terms that the mediators refused to forward it to Miskolcz lest it should lead to an immediate rupture.<sup>2</sup> Amnesty, grace, pardon, the Emperor's diploma, the Palatine's patents were offered and invoked therein, which were the very things the Hungarians would not hear of. The Court refused to modify the reply, but consented to have it suppressed and another couched in more satisfactory terms sent by the mediators in their own name. The assembly at Miskolcz did not accept this as sufficient, and issued a manifesto to the nation to inform it that they had entered into negotiations, but that the House of Austria had not as yet given the desired declaration that it recognized Hungary as a free and independent country.

If the Hungarians could not obtain the full recognition they wanted, there could be no disguise about the fact that they had won a good deal. Only two years had elapsed since the Austrian statesmen

<sup>1</sup> Wratislaw to the mediators, December 2, 1705, *Archivum II.*, vol. ii. p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> Bruyninx wrote to Stepney that with the greatest possible care the Imperial Ministers could not have drawn up a paper more destructive of its own ends, and that its sending might induce the assembly at Miskolcz to declare the throne vacant. "Victorious generals holding the enemy at their mercy might have spoken so, but not a Court wishing to conciliate a nation. In Vienna they are either blind or think everybody else a fool" (January). —*Archivum II.*, vol. ii. pp. 370-378.

would deal with them solely through secret emissaries, and now the Emperor had appointed a prince of the Empire to treat with Rakoczi's commissioners. His allies as well as his enemies accredited their Ministers to the Hungarian leader, and in their letters addressed him as their beloved cousin. Again had Hungary taken rank among European nations and entered as a factor into their political calculations. And what was more, it had all been won by the nation's own force alone without any Turkish aid or connivance. Well might the Hungarian leaders pause and ask themselves whether it was not time to stop on the steps of the graduated staircase,<sup>1</sup> leaving the care of further ascent to the future.

Rakoczi had called not only his senate but also his economic council to Miskolcz, and if the war was to be continued, the measures to be discussed by the latter were of even more importance than those by the former. If finance was the weakest spot in the Emperor's armament, it was still more so in Hungary, where there was neither regular revenue from taxation nor credit. The Austrian attempt to impose a taxation of 4 million florins on the country had been one of the chief causes of the uprising, and when Rakoczi's power was established he abandoned this source of revenue, or rather left it to the disposition of the counties, who levied the taxes or not as they could and

<sup>1</sup> Bercsenyi's own words in a letter of March 27, 1705.

pleased. They had to furnish what was necessary for the entertainment of the troops, gratuitous labour and contributions in kind, but this revenue was uncertain and its burden fell very unequally upon the various parts of the country. Of regular income the Confederacy had only the revenues from the crown domains, from the indirect taxes—duties on importations and taxes on salt—and from the produce of the mines, about 600,000 florins yearly altogether. Rakoczi paid his household troops from his private income and received from Lewis XIV. a monthly subsidy of 50,000 francs. To fill the unavoidable gap he had recourse to credit money. That, owing to the crudity of the times, it was coined out of copper instead of being printed on paper made it less convenient to carry, but added nothing to its intrinsic value. He had resorted to this expediency almost from the beginning of his power, when about 2 million florins of this money had been put into circulation. This amount had been greatly increased since,<sup>1</sup> and the natural consequence had followed. The precious metals had disappeared, the copper money had been devaluated, and prices had risen. Besides, the crude coinage of the new money had made its imitation easy, and the country was swamped with spurious coins. Clearly something had to be devised to obviate the ever-growing difficulties, and what that

<sup>1</sup> On February 13 Des Alleurs writes that the amount already coined was 20 million, clearly an exaggeration.

something should be was now laid before the economic council.

Sound heads were not wanting in the assembly who understood that war could not be waged and government carried on without certain and increased revenue and on fictitious money only. Foremost amongst them was Stephen Platthy, who at Szecsen had made a bold stand against Bercsenyi on the question of Protestant revindications, and who now proposed that the further coinage of the "Libertas" money<sup>1</sup> should be stopped and a war tax imposed upon all real estate without difference of classes. But Rakoczi was afraid of the unpopularity of the measure, and opposed it. He was as well aware that something could not be made out of nothing as was Count Gundaker Starhemberg in Vienna, but he viewed the question from political more than from economic considerations, and dreaded the disaffection the proposed taxation might engender more than the dangers of further depreciation. He further thought that things might be carried on two or three years longer with the copper money chiefly, if its usefulness were enhanced by its being made legal tender for the payment of debts.<sup>2</sup> In no case was he prepared to go so far as to subject the privileged classes to a direct taxation, and therefore

<sup>1</sup> The coins were officially called *Libertas* from the picture of the goddess of liberty stamped upon them, but the people called them *kongo*, which means "resounders."

<sup>2</sup> The copper money had originally been made for the payment of the troops, and was not legal tender for the payment of debts or redeeming of mortgages.

could easily make use of the argument that the new tax would fail to accomplish its purpose of bringing money into circulation. For if there was any money hoarded, it was by the upper classes, upon whom the tax would not fall, and all the vexations which usually went with such taxation would fail to extract from the lower orders and bring into circulation what they did not possess. Rakoczi's views naturally prevailed, and a series of resolutions were taken, which, however, plunged the country only deeper into the quagmire of financial distress. The coinage of copper was increased, the value of the unit lowered, it was made legal tender for the discharge of debts, regulations of prices were issued under severe penalties for offenders, and as a safeguard against imitations it was resolved to stamp the coins with the picture of the Holy Virgin.

These measures were a great mistake, and the financial disorder which they produced undoubtedly contributed towards sapping the strength of the national cause. But if taxation was to be avoided and loans were not to be had either at home<sup>1</sup> or abroad, they seemed unavoidable, and were resorted to just as the French issued their assignats during

<sup>1</sup> The system of national loans was yet in its infancy in Continental Europe at the period, but even if it had further developed a loan could not have been raised in Hungary because of the scarcity of ready money. Lewis XIV. transmitted his subsidies to Rakoczi through Poland by letters of exchange, and, to avoid the cost, risk, and delay of such remittances, suggested that the money might be advanced by capitalists in Hungary, who in turn would receive inscriptions on the *Hôtel de Ville* (equivalent to good bonds). But Des Alleurs replied that there was not a single person in Hungary who could place 6000 francs on the *Hôtel de Ville*.

the great Revolution, and the southern states of the American Union their paper money (bluebacks) during their Civil War.

During all these negotiations and deliberations warfare had been continued. In spite of the defeat at Zsibo the military situation at the beginning of 1706 was 'decidedly in favour of the Hungarians. In the north—from Pozsony to Munkacs—Rakoczi held undisputed sway, and his generals had just established his rule in those south-western counties on the right bank of the Danube the protection of which the authorities at Vienna had particularly at heart. To reconquer them the Austrians had no troops available. The bulk of their army was in Transylvania, from whence it could not be moved, and where it had to fight with difficulties of its own. Palfy's feeble forces had been so much reduced that he found himself unable to guard the lines of the Leitha, whither he had retreated in December, and retired still farther under the very walls of Vienna. Reinforcements were ordered from Bavaria, where the peasant uprising against the Austrian rule had just been quenched, but until they arrived he could do nothing.

The Trans-Danubian counties in the meanwhile formally joined the Confederacy established at Szecsen. They did not only take the prescribed oath and send a deputation to Rakoczi in Eger to present him with their homage, but showed themselves willing to fulfil the obligations of their new

allegiance. Fourteen new regiments were formed out of their contingents, ten of cavalry and four of infantry, and although most of these men were as yet raw levies, there were also a good many old and tried frontier soldiers amongst them. At the same time an entrenched camp was established in the Rabakoz near Kapuvar, and the forts of the Raba and Rabcza fortified by Riviere, which proved of great value in the ensuing operations.

As the Austrian Government at that time undoubtedly wished for peace,<sup>1</sup> it would have clearly been in their interest to conclude a truce, which at least would have insured their unprotected frontiers against new inroads. But they wanted to obtain from the armistice what they could only gain by a victorious campaign, and as the Hungarians refused to evacuate the counties which they held, or to consent to any withdrawal of troops from Transylvania, a new effort was to be made, and a concentric attack from three sides was devised by the Imperial Council of War. There were a few German soldiers left in the fortresses of Petervarad and Brod, and also some Croatian and Servian frontier militia in the country around them. The commanders of those forts, Baron Nehem and Count Herberstein, received orders to organize an expeditionary corps with these forces, to cross the river Drava, and to march on Bottjan's army from

<sup>1</sup> It was at this time that Des Alleurs wrote that the Imperial Court had an inconceivable desire for peace.

the south. Hannibal Heister was to come from Styria with the Styrian and Croatian levies he could assemble, and Palfy was to march from the lines of the Leitha and join the other two invading corps at or around Szombathely. In this way an army of about 11,000 men was to be brought together which ought to be sufficient to turn the tables and drive the kurucz beyond the Danube.

The plan was well conceived on paper but utterly failed in its execution.

The preparations for the attack from the Drava had not remained secret before the Hungarian leaders. To meet it, Bottjan had been ordered south, while in the west, where Bercsenyi could always exercise control, Stephen Csaky and Paul Andrassy were left in separate commands. Owing to their inefficiency, Bercsenyi a few weeks later sent Forgach across the Danube to take supreme command over them both.

The first to move was General Herberstein ; he was also the first to give up. With a small corps of about 3000 men he crossed the Drava on February 4, marched on Pech, which he found abandoned by the enemy, and from there to Igal, where Bottjan, with a force of about the same number, stood ready to meet him. The Austrian commander won the day, but there his success ended. Neither the temper nor the discipline of his levies made them fit for lasting exertions or long-winded operations. They had filled their bags



and carts with the loot of the towns and villages they had traversed, and now wanted to bring it home. Herberstein still advanced towards Simonytorna, but when on his way he found Bottjan in an entrenched position, he did not choose to attack him a second time, but decided to turn back. On the 24th he recrossed the Drava, and two days later arrived in Brod, from where he had started. His campaign had been nothing more than a raid.

Nor did Pálffy and Heister achieve much more. The former had had to wait for his reinforcements, and it was only on the 24th of February that he set out on his campaign. On March 6 he entered Soprony, where he was welcomed with shouts of joy by its citizens. They had been besieged and then blockaded by the kurucz, but now Pálffy's arrival put an end to their woes. From Soprony the Imperial commander advanced east to the lines of the Raba, but when he arrived there he found the fordable places so strongly entrenched and the kurucz in so guarded a position that he did not care to attack them. So he turned back to Szombathely to wait for Heister, who was coming from Styria by way of St. Gotthard and Körmend.

Hitherto neither of the Austrian commanders had met with any resistance. Andrassy and Csaky simply retreated before them, although they had a great superiority in numbers and held the inner lines. It is true that their troops were mostly county levies (Hajdu), but those of the enemy, at

least Heister's, were not of a different calibre. When the latter arrived at Körmend he was attacked by Ebeczky's and Bezeregy's hussars, and a skirmish ensued, in which the kurucz had decidedly the advantage. On March 21 Palffy and Heister joined their forces and then marched forward again to the Raba with the intention of forcing its passage. Before leaving Szombathely Palffy had the town burned, thus adding heavily to a score which the kurucz were soon to repay with interest.

This time again the advance to the Raba ended with a retreat. The river was fordable at Kapuvar and Lovo, but both places were, thanks to Riviere, strongly fortified. Forgach, who had taken over his command on the 15th, was on the other side with a force of about 14,000, of whom 9000 were cavalry. Both commanders were eager for a battle, but neither dared to attack the other in his position. Forgach would have fain met his adversary in the open, where his superiority in cavalry would have told to his advantage, but Palffy felt this, and, being likewise unable to advance across the river or south to Servar and Papa, being besides sorely harassed by the kurucz light cavalry and running short of provisions, decided on a retreat, and by Csepreg, Locsmand, and Koszeg moved slowly back to Soprony.

In the meanwhile the horrors of war had been brought home to the Austrian border provinces. This time their own troops had set the bad example.

During January kurucz riders had made several inroads into Austria and Moravia, but had refrained, if not from looting, at least from wanton destruction. But when at the end of the month some Austrian forces brought provisions and munitions to the sorely pressed fortress of Trencsen, several villages had been looted and burned by the Moravian militia who accompanied them. Then Herberstein had continued the work of destruction and Palfy had done the same, burning not only villages but even a town like Szomabthely. To avenge these proceedings, to strike terror into Vienna, and to exercise pressure on the Austrian generals, Forgach now sent two raiding expeditions over the frontier. Stephen Balogh with about 2000 to 3000 men was to ride into Austria, George Rethey with a like force into Styria. They had orders to loot, to kill, and to burn, and they obeyed them to their hearts' content. Balogh slipped by Palfy's troops on March 28, and on the next day rode round Wiener Neustadt, through Baden and Laxenburg, up to the walls of Vienna, destroying everything on his way. The following day he recrossed the frontier by way of Bruck, bringing the Emperor's falcons and mules with him, which he had captured at Laxenburg. Still greater havoc was wrought by Rethey in Styria, where he raided the country from the frontier to the capital of Gratz. About ninety-two villages, two towns, and several castles were burnt by the raiders.

Great was the woe of the Austrians and Styrians, and their discontent turned not only against the Emperor's Ministers, who through their obstinacy with regard to the armistice had really caused their sufferings, but also against the unfortunate generals Pálffy and Heister, who had been unable to avert them. Even at Court Pálffy's credit seemed for a moment to be shaken, and there was a question of relieving him from his command in Hungary and sending him to Italy or Spain.<sup>1</sup> But when a few days later Guido Starhemberg, after Prince Eugen the best and most illustrious of the Emperor's generals, was appointed to supreme command in Hungary, he expressed the formal wish of having Pálffy to remain with him, and it was forthwith granted.<sup>2</sup>

In the East the tide of events had likewise run in favour of the Hungarians. They could not expect to regain by one direct blow what they had lost at Zsibo, but they could count on time and distance to work for them in weakening and exhausting the enemy. The voids which the

<sup>1</sup> This change had already been considered in March before the last Hungarian raids. When the two armies were facing each other at Csepreg (March 24), Forgách had intercepted a courier from Vienna to Pálffy, and in his mail found an intimation from the Imperial Council of War that he would be shortly transferred to Italy, also a letter from his wife wherein she complained bitterly about the losses they had suffered. Forgách sent this letter to Pálffy with one of his own, highly characteristic of his offhand, bousterous and overbearing, and yet loyal, sensible, and highly patriotic nature. Pálffy in his reply strongly repudiated all responsibility for the burnings and destructions, and insisted on his unalterable devotion to his rightful king. See the two letters in *Archivum Rakocsiannum II*, vol. ii. pp. 586-588.

<sup>2</sup> On May 13 Lewis XIV. wrote to Des Alleurs that he had received news that Pálffy was no longer trusted in Vienna because the kurutz had spared his estates, and would have to leave the service. This was evidently based on talk and hearsay about the episode of Vorosko in October, and was untrue.

victorious campaign had torn in the Imperial army could not be filled; horses, ammunition, and clothes were wanting; and communications with Vienna were slow and uncertain. The kurucz in the meanwhile had rallied from the first effect of their defeat; they still held one-third of Transylvania; Karolyi had reorganized his forces, and from the valley of the Szamos began a campaign of skirmishing warfare calculated to worry and harass the enemy. Several minor engagements took place, where the Austrians and their Danish auxiliaries were surprised and suffered serious loss. Slowly but sorely their positions had changed. They had come to Transylvania as conquerors; in the course of the winter they found themselves shut in. The recognition that time and circumstances were helping in the ruin of the enemy was the chief reason for which Rakoczi in the early winter and till the meeting at Miskolcz opposed the armistice. For the same reason the Imperial Government wished to withdraw part of their troops. But Rabutin, who had succeeded Herbeville in the command, judged that they were not in condition to move. On April 7 the Emperor sent him at last positive orders to march with the bulk of his forces from Transylvania to the banks of the Tibiscus, but these did not reach him before the 11th of May, and when towards the end of this month the Imperial Commissioner, Count Althan, arrived to inform him of the armistice, he found him not on the Tibiscus but far

away at Szasz Sebes, while Karolyi had advanced to the line of the river Maros.

Under the influence of adversity the Austrian Ministers abated their pretensions. At the beginning of March they had still insisted on the evacuation of the Trans-Danubian counties during the armistice. The kurucz commissioners would not hear of such a condition, and Rechteren and Bruyninx, in despair over this interminable haggling, had sent a draught of their own to Vienna, with the declaration that if it was not accepted they would consider their mission as ended. The effect of their letter was heightened by the news of Balogh's raid, and on the 30th of March the Imperial Council dropped the obnoxious condition and sent new proposals based on the actual state of things. But Bercsenyi saw a trap in every Austrian concession, and it took two weeks of further deliberations before a fortnight's suspension of arms for Western Hungary only was agreed upon, then three weeks more until this short and localized truce was converted into a general and longer armistice. There were its duration, the cantonments of Palfy's troops, the means for their subsistence, the revictualling of the fortresses still held by the Austrians, and the communications with the army in Transylvania to be settled, and the same spirit of distrust and cavil which had prevailed through all the negotiations, and which always feared to be taken in, and wished to make the most of every trifling occurrence, entered

into the discussion of these questions. Finally, an agreement was effected after a personal appeal to Rakoczi, to whom Stepney and Rechteren had paid a visit in Nyitra. The armistice was to last until the 12th of July. An elaborate convention in twelve Articles was drawn up, signed by the commissioners, and ratified by the Emperor and Rakoczi. In the adjustment of most of the disputed questions the Hungarians had carried their point; moreover, they had gained another important concession. In the instrument of the armistice the Court of Vienna recognized for the first and only time the Hungarian Confederacy, calling their adversaries no longer malcontents but Confederate Estates of Hungary. Nevertheless Bercsenyi refused to put his name to the instrument, which bears only the signatures of Csaky, Kajaly, and Gerhard. During all the negotiations as also at the Conference of Nyitra he had been raising objections and difficulties,<sup>1</sup> and now he was dissatisfied with a concession Rakoczi had made with regard to the dislocation of Palfy's troops.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Stepney's account of his journey to Nyitra, State Paper No. 553 of the 8th of May, *Arch. Rak. II.*, vol. iii. p. 11; also Rechteren's letter to Stepney of May 12, *ibid.* p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> The troops of both sides lived mainly at the expense of the country which they occupied, and this consideration entered into the wish of the Austrians to make the boundary for Palfy's division as wide as possible. When the point of their retreat behind the Leitha was in discussion, Rakoczi had in a private letter to his wife declared his inclination to furnish them with provisions in a manner to be agreed upon later. Thereupon the Austrians raised most exorbitant pretensions (13,516 portions for men, and 7316 for horses), and the point was finally settled by allowing them to occupy during the armistice a territory of about 4 square miles more than Bercsenyi had conceded to the mediation. Hence his dissatisfaction. See Stepney's letter to Harley of May 12, State Paper No. 560.

## CHAPTER VIII

The Peace Congress at Nagyszombat—Rakoczi and Wratislaw—  
Transylvanian question the main obstacle to peace—Failure of  
the Congress.

THE Peace Congress was to assemble on the 25th of May, and it had been agreed upon that the Hungarians would open it by presenting their demands. The time had come for Rakoczi to lay his cards on the table and clearly to define the issue between him and Austria.

Hitherto he had endeavoured to avoid doing so. In his opening manifesto he had declared that he had taken arms to free his country from the Austrian yoke. When reconciliation was at first broached, the demand for an international guarantee had been raised, then the question of heredity and King Andrew's Bull. From Gyöngyös Szechenyi had sent the XXV. Articles, but they represented rather what he had gathered to be the sense of the nation than its formulated demands. Neither at Selmecz nor at Szecsen, nor during the long negotiations of the preceding winter did the Hungarian leaders formally and clearly state their conditions for peace.





When Rakoczi re-entered his country and unfurled the banner of revolution he undoubtedly intended to go as far as he could, and finally to sever the connection of Hungary with the House of Austria. His right to do so was neither more nor less than that of William of Orange and George Washington, who cut the ties which bound their countries to Spain and Great Britain. His ability to carry out what he planned depended on the temper of his nation and its military power, and these again turned on the fortune of the great war in the West. Hence Rakoczi's endeavours to shape his declarations according to its events.

In the meanwhile the Transylvanian election had brought a new element into the situation, which soon became its dominant factor.<sup>2</sup> As yet Rakoczi had made no formal declaration that the recognition of his election was to be the crucial point for peace or war; but that it was so in his mind was no secret for either friend or foe.<sup>1</sup> Would the Emperor concede Transylvania to the Prince or not? was the theme constantly discussed at the camp-fires of the kurucz as well as at the banqueting tables and in the council chambers of their leaders.

That the Hungarian grievances were real and serious is beyond a doubt. Far more serious than those which made the colonies of America take arms

<sup>1</sup> See his letters to Okolicsanyi and Szirmay in *Arch. Rak. I.*, vol. I, pp. 449-450; *ibid.* pp. 463, 473-474, where he also mentions what he had written to his wife on the subject; Bercsenyi's declarations to the mediators, *Arch. Rak. I.*, p. 1; Stepney's reports, and above all those of Des Alleurs from January 1705 onward.

against George III. Reluctantly and half-heartedly even Emperor Leopold had acknowledged it; his son had always laid stress on the fact that he was innocent of the acts which had caused them. But with the repeal of the obnoxious measures, the restoration of the constitution, the promise to respect it in the future, and the referring of all special desires to the next Parliament the Sovereign had done all that could be asked from him, and he expected that for the fulfilment his word had to be accepted. That as a punishment for past misdeeds or a guarantee against their repetition he should consent to the abolition of hereditary, the right of armed resistance, the guarantee of foreign Powers, or the abandonment of a province was and could not be expected as long as his power was not broken. Put like this the question was unsolvable but by force of arms.

From the outset the Austrian statesmen had judged that peace might be easily achieved if they could make terms with either one of the two leaders. At different intervals they had approached Bercsenyi, but with scant success; now a supreme attempt was to be made to come to a direct understanding with Rakoczi. The task was to be undertaken by Count Wratislaw<sup>1</sup>—with the exception of Prince Eugen

<sup>1</sup> John Wenzel, Count Wratislaw (born 1669), entered the Imperial service 1693, was sent to England on a special mission after the death of Charles of Spain for the conclusion of the great alliance. He remained there and at The Hague until May 1703. Towards the end of the same year he accompanied Charles of Austria, for whom the allies claimed the Spanish throne, as far as England, and remained there after the latter's departure for

the ablest of the Emperor's advisers. He was a statesman of sound judgment, great experience, and strong convictions. He was no enemy of Hungary, still less of Rakoczi himself. Had the direction of affairs lain in his hands a decade ago, it might be assumed that the nation would not have been driven to despair. But he was above all a devoted servant of his Sovereign's interests, and he fully understood the importance of Transylvania. There he was unshakable. Liberal, yea brilliant, compensations he was ready to offer to Rakoczi; but sooner than advise the Emperor to yield on this point he would see his right hand cut off.<sup>1</sup>

To pave the way for Wratislaw's mission Princess Rakoczi was to be used. The favour of her visit had been solicited by her husband from Selmecz eighteen months ago, but then peremptorily refused.<sup>2</sup> The short truce had hardly been arranged when she announced to him that the Emperor had now consented to her visit on condition that he would send her back to Vienna whenever the Emperor should require it. The promise was given and the Princess

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Portugal. It was in those days that his intimate friendship with the Duke of Marlborough was formed. He accompanied the Duke in his campaign of 1704, and was present at the battle of Blenheim. After his return to Vienna he was made Supreme Judge (Oberst Landrichter) and later Chancellor of Bohemia; and whenever important diplomatic negotiations offered, was selected for the task. So in 1706 for the negotiations with Rakoczi, and the year after with Charles XII. of Sweden. He died in 1712. For his biography see Arneth's essay "Wratislaw," in *Allgemeine deutsche Biographien*.

<sup>1</sup> See Arneth as above.

<sup>2</sup> Stepney to Harley, May 1, 1706, *Arch. Rak. II.*, vol. ii. pp. 640-641. If in 1704 the Austrian authorities would not consent to Princess Rakoczi's leaving Vienna, they seem to have become rather eager to get rid of her two years later. Compare above, p. 90.

sent on her way even before the real armistice had been concluded.

During her three days' journey this young lady<sup>1</sup> had ample occasions to make reflections on the vicissitudes of life. It was nearly five years since she had seen her husband. He was then in the prison of Wioner Neustadt, with the executioner's sword hanging over his head, from which she had helped him to escape. Now she was to see him again as the actual ruler of his nation. And what was more, the powers that sent her to him were the same who five years ago had contemplated his destruction. Now she was to assure him of their goodwill, and to offer him honours and wealth. The pomp and circumstance of her travel was in befitting harmony with her husband's position and the object of her mission. The Austrians vied with the Hungarians to pay her honours. Two squadrons of red-coated Imperial dragoons escorted her gilt and crimson-cushioned gala coach<sup>2</sup> through the country held by the Austrians. At the gates of Pozsony she was received by the commander of the town, Count Zinzendorf, and at the palace, where her apartments had been prepared, by the Chancellors of Hungary and Bohemia, Counts Erdödy and Wratislaw. The next day the latter gave a banquet in her honour, at which Field-Marshal Starhemberg, Count Pálffy, Archbishop Szechenyi, Stepney, Rechteren, and in

<sup>1</sup> She was then twenty-seven years old.

<sup>2</sup> It had been made for the occasion, and cost 12,000 florins.

fact everybody of note in Pozsony, were present. At the eastern gates of Pozsony 800 kurucz hussars, under Ocskay's command, were waiting for her, and her journey over the territory in her husband's possession became a triumphal procession. In the towns through which she passed the crowds were shouting, banners flying and guns firing. At Bazin, where she spent the second night, Forgach did her the honours, at Vedröd Countess Bercsenyi, with a large number of ladies belonging to the kurucz aristocracy, were waiting for her with dinner, at the bridge of Szered, where he had so often been encamped, Bercsenyi received her, and outside of the town of Nyitra, where his guards had been ordered to parade, Rakoczi himself met her. She had supposed that their interview would take place at the Castle of Tapolcsany, and either she was too much absorbed in her conversation with Bercsenyi, who was sitting in her coach beside her, or else time and a strenuous life had worked their changes, for she certainly did not recognize her husband in the tall, dark captain in plain uniform, who had been riding alongside her carriage for some time. It was only when, after arriving at the place where the carabineer guards were posted, he had exchanged his short, overhanging, fur coat, for one of royal purple, and donned the diamond-studded, heron-plumed headgear, that she knew the husband who, amidst the firing of salutes, the lowering of flags, and the hurrahs of the people, took her into his arms.

That the Princess had not merely come on an errand of love or courtesy was everybody's guess. It soon became known that she had brought to her husband, not only the Emperor's kind messages, but also the offer of the Marquisate of Burgau, to be erected into a principality as a compensation for Transylvania.<sup>1</sup> If her mission had merely excited the apprehensions of Des Alleurs or even the anxiety of Bercsenyi, nothing would have seemed more natural ; but it is a curious instance of the professional's dislike for an amateur's performance that it should also have provoked the severest criticism of the mediators.<sup>2</sup>

Whether, and to what extent, the Princess endeavoured to move her husband in the sense of her mission does not appear with certainty from the sources at our disposition. To judge from the reports of Stepney and Des Alleurs<sup>3</sup> it would seem

<sup>1</sup> The Dutch papers wrote about it a few weeks later, and Lewis XIV. comments upon it in a letter to Des Alleurs of the 20th of June.

<sup>2</sup> Stepney wrote to Harley on May 2 that the Princess's visit was granted "out of a design to sow discord and surmises amongst the chiefs of the confederates," and then continues: "The Imperial Ministers conform themselves to all shapes, and turn sharply from one extreme to the other when they presume it to be for their interest. Any reasonable body will easily see through these affected civilities."

<sup>3</sup> Stepney in his letter to Harley of June 14, says: "I called to his remembrance the discussion I had with him at Schemnitz, where I heartily entreated him to divest himself of all such notions (with regard to Transylvania), and rather think of an equivalent in the Empire. . . . The Princess owned to us she was of that opinion, and had frequently endeavoured to bring him over to those sentiments." But in the same letter later on he says: "This and much more had little effect on him, but both he and the Princess confidently asserted that His Majesty ought not in the least be surprised at this demand, having been frequently informed . . . that it could not be otherwise, and they obliquely hinted to us that some sort of hopes had been given . . . that the Court might give way on this material point when we came to a decision." Des Alleurs, on his side, wrote to Lewis XIV. on the 17th

that she herself at times entertained the illusion that the Court of Vienna might ultimately yield on the subject of Transylvania,<sup>1</sup> or that her new surroundings remained not without influence on her. What is certain is that her appeals—if she made them—did not alter her husband's resolutions. Whatever their affections were in the early days of their marriage, the long separation had worked its natural effect. The Princess had not been three weeks with her husband when she wrote to Vienna that the state of her health required a cure at Carlsbad. The permission was refused, as Wratislaw judged that she might still be useful where she was.

The usefulness of the poor lady turned most certainly not on her powers of persuasion, but her presence in her husband's Court was very convenient for other purposes. At a period of history where questions of etiquette held paramount importance, it would have been difficult for the mediators, and almost impossible for the Ministers of the Emperor, personally to approach Rakoczi without raising a

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of May: "Mme la princesse qui parait avoir une parfaite connaissance des maximes de la cour de Vienne et de l'humeur de ses ministres semble être persuadée que l'on ne cédera point la Transylvanie au prince Rakoczi, cependant elle ne lui conseille pas de se désister de cette prétension, au contraire elle parait convaincue qu'il n'y a que la possession de cette principauté qui puisse assurer la vie et les biens du prince. C'est dans cette vue qu'elle se le presse point d'accepter aucun équivalent dans l'empire. . . . Cette princesse ne s'épouvante point des menaces de la cour de Vienne, elle fait voir dans tous ses sentiments du courage et de la fermeté."

<sup>1</sup> This, however, seems very unlikely. It is much more probable that the Princess at the time had reasons of her own for not wishing overmuch for an arrangement, the natural consequence of which would be her having to remain with her husband. See Stepney's and the Venetian envoy's reports, cited p. 90.

whole whirlwind of issues about the ceremonial. Already, when Stepney and Rechteren had gone to Nyitra to arrange about the armistice, the presence of the Princess had offered an outlet from these difficulties. They had simply called on her. Rakoczi had come into the room as if by accident, and the rest had followed as a matter of course. The Austrians had still their trump card to play, and in order to save Wratislaw's intended visits from rubs and embarrassments the Princess had to postpone her Carlsbad cure.

Rakoczi had invited his Senate to a meeting at Érsek Ujvar in order to draw up the peace propositions. When these were at last formulated and formally handed over to the mediators at Nagyszombat, half of the armistice had expired. Transmitting the Hungarian demands to his Government, Stepney characterized them as being of three classes: (1) such as the Emperor is obliged to grant as founded on reason, justice, and law; (2) such as he may grant out of fatherly affection and convenience, and (3) such as he was bound to reject.<sup>1</sup>

The Hungarian demands consisted of twenty-three Articles, and moved on the same lines as those of 1704. Only that which then had vaguely been put forward or merely hinted at was now clearly expressed. The foreign guarantee was insisted upon, and not only that of England and the

<sup>1</sup> Stepney to Harley, June 15, 1706, State Paper 594, in *Arch. Rak. II.*, iii. pp. 81-84.



Netherlands, but also that of Sweden, Prussia, Poland, and Venice. So was the recognition of the right of resistance as established by King Andrew's Bull. The right of heredity was not formally denied, but the acts of the diet of Pozsony were declared null and void, and the question of the succession to the throne relegated to the next diet. The separation of Transylvania and the free election of her princes was unequivocally demanded. Withdrawal of all foreign troops, re-establishment of the Palatine's office in full powers, separate military organization of Hungary, exclusion of all foreign interference in the administration of the kingdom, conferring of dignities and offices on Hungarians only, free exercise of the recognized religions, expulsion of the Jesuits, invalidation of illegal donations, abolition of the "neo acquistica" commission, indemnity for those illegally condemned during the last revolutions, not only amnesty but recognition for those involved in the present one, confirmation by royal oath of all laws, treaties, and diplomas, and the convocation of Parliament once at least in three years formed the subject of the succeeding Articles. There were, besides, two new demands, one stipulating expressly a reward for Rakoczi and Bercsenyi, the other for a redemption of the copper money coined until now and actually in circulation.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For their full text see *Histoire des Révolutions de Hongrie*, vol. i. p. 373 387.

That in Vienna these demands should have been found exorbitant and impertinent, and that the Emperor's Ministers chafed under the necessity of having to take them into consideration<sup>1</sup> is not to be wondered at. Still, what the Hungarians demanded was the re-establishment of a state of things they considered as legal, and which had been confirmed by the treaties of Vienna, Nikolsburg, and Linz. Where that state of things had actually been abrogated it had—with the exception of a few points—been done so not by law but by arbitrary power. That the acts of the Diet of Pozsony, establishing hereditary and abolishing King Andrew's Decree, were invalid because obtained through undue influence was a pretension hardly to be maintained in a court of law, and certainly only to be made good by the sword in politics. But that all the acts which, during the fourteen years from that diet to Rakoczi's imprisonment, had engendered so much discontent and bitterness were arbitrarily taken in violation of all laws could not be disputed. And that the cardinal point, viz.: the status of Transylvania, should have remained in doubt, dispute, and obscurity was the consequence of the fault committed when Hungary had been excluded from her rightful participation in the Peace of Carlowitz.

Anyhow the Hungarian demands were not an ultimatum, but propositions offering a basis for

<sup>1</sup> See a letter of Emperor Joseph to Count Gallas of July 21, 1706, H. H. Staats-Archiv, wherein the Emperor himself had corrected the draught of his Ministers, who had called the Hungarians obstinate rebels.

negotiation. As soon as Stepney and Rechteren had received them they hastened to Pozsony, whither the Cardinal of Lorraine, Counts Illeshazy, Lamberg, and, a little later, Wratislaw likewise came from Vienna. It is characteristic of the times that the first point which presented itself for discussion should again have been one of etiquette, viz. : whether in the cardinal's house the mediators should have rank before or behind the Emperor's commissioners, who were privy councillors. The point was left in abeyance at first, finally decided in favour of the foreigners, the Hungarian demands were delivered, and then mediators and commissioners repaired to Vienna, the former to make an appeal to the Emperor, the latter to take part in the Cabinet deliberations on the reply to be given.

The Austrians this time did their work quicker than the Hungarians had done. The Imperial Commission had received the latter's demands on 15th June; on the 28th it was again assembled in Pozsony and the Imperial reply handed over to the mediators in solemn conference. Like the State paper to which it referred, it moved over well-trodden ground. The re-establishment of the constitution, all laws and privileges, the promise to keep them inviolate in the future, and to hold a diet once at least every three years was freely given; all special grievances and desires referred to the next session of Parliament, liberal recognition held out for Rakoczi and Bercsenyi, and the question of a

guarantee declared to be one for the end and not for the commencement of the treaty. An emphatic refusal was only opposed to the demand for Transylvania.

In the meanwhile a new complication had risen which, as it touched the heart of the matter at once, assumed alarming proportions, and was destined to become the point on which the labour for peace ultimately foundered.

When the Hungarian Confederacy was constituted at Szechen it had been decided to send a deputation to Transylvania for the inauguration of Rakoczi, and to offer an alliance to the principality, binding both countries not to make a separate peace with the Emperor. The battle of Zsibo had frustrated this purpose, and when Rabutin had become the master of the country he had called a diet to Segesvar, which had renounced all allegiance to Rakoczi and declared the Emperor to be its true and lawful Sovereign. But in March Rakoczi had called another diet of his adherents to Huszt in Hungary, which in its turn protested against the acts passed at Segesvar, and unanimously voted the alliance with Hungary according to the offer of Szecsen. At the same time commissioners were chosen to represent the country at the impending negotiations. When early in June the mediators paid a second visit to Rakoczi to urge the presentation of the Hungarian demands, they were informed that the delay had been caused by the absence of the

Transylvanians; but that now they had arrived, and would accompany the Hungarian commissioners to Nagyszombat with credentials from him as their Prince.

In itself the inclusion of the Transylvanians into the peace would only have been natural and legitimate. For although the Austrians maintained the view that the country was reconquered and pacified, and dissatisfied individuals might speak for themselves but not in the name of any constituted bodies,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Austrian point of view is clearly exposed in a letter of Emperor Joseph to Count Galles, his Minister in London, of July 21, Vienna Hanc., Hof- und Staats-Archiv, 1706. The Emperor writes:

"You know from the course and nature of the Hungarian negotiations hitherto carried on, of which we have always kept you fully and exactly informed, what and how much we have conceded from pure desire of peace, from love and paternal affection for this our erring kingdom, and principally in honour of the two mediating Powers. . . . Our peace-loving disposition may be seen from our declaration on the informal propositions of the rebels. But far from showing any inclination to give thereupon a counter-declaration containing even an appearance of any desire for peace, they began—in order to gain time, or rather to make us lose it—to raise malevolent evasions or ill-contrived pretents that they could not accept our reply before we had recognised the Transylvanians as Confederate Estates,—which, however, could not and will not be conceded. For although the designation of the Hungarian rebels in the armistice as Confederate Estates of the kingdom has been forced upon us, the case of the few fugitive Transylvanians who have joined the Hungarians is quite different. The Hungarian rebels occupy the greater part of the kingdom, and many fortified places, they form an organised body, even if an inadmissible one, they constitute a military corps which—alas—is but too strong, nevertheless they have not had the presumption to elect another king; whereas the Transylvanians who have joined the rebels are fugitives from their country, own no forts or places, constitute no organised body . . . and are not even able to assemble in a due locality. The designation as Estates can therefore be the less conceded to them, as some of them have instituted the invalid election of Rakoczi, which has been reversed and annulled by the loyal Transylvanians, who are the vast majority. Consequently, and in order not to let the said Transylvanians act as Estates and thereby to seem to approve the invalid election or to give an opportunity to have it brought forward, we have from well considered reasons declined to admit those exiles as Estates to the treaty of peace. Nevertheless, and in order to overcome this obstacle, we have consented that the mediators should deliver to them an act '*de non prejudicando*,' but so that we should have no part or knowledge therein. Through this expedient the rebels have after long

it was still a fact that seven counties were in Rakoczi's possession, and that a large part of the higher and lower nobility, as well as of the people, were in his favour.<sup>1</sup> But as the whole question of peace turned on the maintenance or resignation of Rakoczi's election, the Austrian Ministers were slow to make concessions, even on formal points, lest they might involve the crux of the matter. In consequence Wratislaw had informed the mediators that the Transylvanians might be heard if they came without any credentials and as the representatives of a group of private individuals. This did not satisfy the Hungarians, and when the mediators returned to Nagyszombat with the Imperial reply to their demands, they refused to receive it, and wanted to raise a protestation asserting Rakoczi's and their allies' rights.<sup>2</sup>

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protestations consented to receive our reply to their propositions, but since then they have under various pretexts delayed their counter-reply, and have only demanded an indefinite prolongation of the armistice until terminated by a fortnight's notice. Although this is directly against our interest, as our army in Transylvania has been ready to march into Upper Hungary since the 30th of May, and cannot remain without its own and the country's greatest detriment, and as besides its stores will be shortly exhausted, and a mutiny and general desertion is to be feared from want of money . . . we have nevertheless agreed to prolong the armistice to the 24th of July. Nor should we have any hesitation in agreeing to a further prolongation if the rebels would forego their unfounded pretensions to Transylvania—the unjustifiable nature of which is amply explained in our reply—and thereby tender a better hope for peace, as is to be seen from our answer to the new instances of the mediation.

"But as this also has been of no use, and as the rebels persist in their improper obstinacy and their chiefs have not paid the least attention to the advantageous offers which they have received, there is not a single hope or appearance of a just and lasting peace unless obtained by force of arms."

The rest of the letter refers to the withdrawal of some regiments from the army on the Rhine to be employed in Hungary.

<sup>1</sup> Stepney to Harley, July 6 and 10, with memorandum of the mediators to the Cardinal of Lorraine. *Archivum Rakocianum II.*, vol. iii. pp. 125-129 and pp. 132-137.

<sup>2</sup> Stepney to Harley, July 2; *ibid.* pp. 106-110.

Things had come to a deadlock. To lift them out of it, one side would have to recede on Transylvania. To establish the fact, to define the situation, and to induce Rakoczi to yield were the objects of Wratislaw's mission. For months back it had been mooted and prepared, now at the eleventh hour it was carried out. But it, too, proved fruitless.

On his way to the Prince, Wratislaw saw Bercsenyi. There were no personal rubs this time. The difficulties of address were got over by mutual agreement, and Wratislaw's manner was as pleasing as that of Scilern had been arrogant eighteen months ago. But as to the merit of the matter he could achieve nothing. Bercsenyi declared himself to be in favour of peace, but not without Transylvania, and insisted on the admission of its deputies. He then treated his visitor to a dissertation on the rights of the case, where he made use of the argument that he could not see how the Austrians could base their claims on any rights of conquest, when Transylvania had not been their enemy but their ally in the war against Turkey.<sup>1</sup> To the blandishments of the

<sup>1</sup> See Bercsenyi's own account of the interview in the two letters which he wrote to Rakoczi on the same day, June 29, *Arch. Rak. I.*, vol. v. pp. 133-139, wherein he says:

"Wratislaw arrived very early this morning, went straight to bed and slept till about ten o'clock. Then we settled through intermediaries that, as he would not pretend 'excellency' from me, I should do so neither, and as he only came to see me, I should call on him and he would return my call. Everything passed accordingly, and I had two conversations with him. He greeted me in the Emperor's name, and very civilly urged me to promote peace. Whereupon, confessing my unworthiness, I assured him that I was not and am not opposed to peace—but that, as on former occasions, war had been begun from public and peace been made from private considerations, it had pleased my country to establish a Confederacy, so that this should not happen again. Therefore no private arrangements can be looked for, there is no way

great Minister he turned as deaf an ear as he had done before to all hints and offers made for the same purpose through minor intermediaries.<sup>1</sup>

to it. On the other hand, as I had sincerely wished for peace from all my heart, I could not help regretting that, as they had rejected our sincerity from want of time, want of time should now frustrate our hopes. He, replying with many words, gave Article II (Transylvania) as the reason, and unless he saw therein a prospect for hope, could see no way to a prolongation, but let us take up the Article of the reply and give an answer, one with it a hope, and he then would endeavour to obtain the prolongation. I said it was too late. And then I went to the mediators and insisted on time. I saw that they approved, but they found the difficulty in the fact that we should have grasped the Transylvanian question as tightly.

"For as I wrote you last night I had a sudden idea. To drop our commitments altogether together with the Transylvanians, and I proposed as a middle term that they should make a protest amounting up to the same— and we should answer that we would not recede from it, and then— in order not to appear to enter into public matters without our allies—we will refuse to accept the reply as long as the Treaty remains not adopted.

Wreslaw afterwards came to me with a sad face, and opening very quietly enquired me with regard to Article II— so that he may leave with at least the same consolation. After exchanging many words, he laid down the principle with regard to Transylvania, that it must remain where it was left by the Peace of Carlowitz. I pretended not to know anything about that— nor could we in any way contravert it, as that peace was concluded about as without and against us. But I expressed my great astonishment as to how the Emperor could appropriate from Turkey a country with which he had been in a more against Turkey. Is truth he was arrested there and his eyes became deluded. Finally, in one word I declared that without Treaty wars there could be nothing, but let them get the Transylvanian demands started, and give us time to see how far we can get in true order.

"About your person I did not enter into any discussion, but he only called you Rakocsi, I merely maintained that we are treating public matters through the mediators. The force of the Confederacy is great— we cannot enter into any private consideration nor hold out a hope for reaching or treating privately even if you wished it, but let things proceed in their own way. So he went away easily to try you. But it is my humble opinion that as you have declared in your last letter that you do not wish the question to be considered a private one, adhere to it, and, regarding Transylvanian questions as a public matter, show indifference for just our present, so that some small hope might give him inducement to a prolongation. Let not your person be in danger, and we might get them to jump at everything which you think good."

<sup>1</sup> Stepany to Harley, July 2, *Arch. Rak. II.*, vol. iii. pp. 106-110.

"Bercenys gave us to understand that he had manifestly declared to Count Wreslaw that he was not capable of betraying his country and acting against his honour and conscience for any particular consideration whatsoever." And later in the same letter: "Bercenys likewise confessed to us that Count Wreslaw would have tempted with him by offering secretly to transport some prizes without communicating with us, but that private invitation was was fully rejected, Count Bercenys having further declared that that being the



As if to cut off all possibility of a retreat, Bercsenyi suggested on the same day to the Transylvanians to put in a protestation against their non-admittance, reminding the Hungarians of their alliance.

On the next day (June 30) Wratislaw met the Prince. They had known each other in former years. The presence of the Princess facilitated their intercourse. Wratislaw remained two days, and there was ample time to discuss all sides and points of the question. He had not come empty-handed. He declared to Rakoczi most positively that the Emperor would never allow him to remain in possession of Transylvania, but he offered him instead the principality of Leuchtenberg on the Rhine, with a seat and a vote in the German Diet, and either the Marquisate of Burgau or the Lordship of Podiebrad in Bohemia in addition. Besides, he was to keep all his vast estates in Hungary. On the other side was the final ruin of himself and his house, as the example of Tököli and, more recently, that of the Elector of Bavaria proved. It was only a few years ago that Wratislaw had been the bearer of similar offers from the Emperor to the latter to detach him from the French alliance. He had rejected them, and now was a fugitive thrown on the mercy of the French King. But offers and threats were alike unavailing. Rakoczi recognized that a German dukedom might be a safer and more

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first time the Hungarian nation was honoured by the appearance of a solemn mediation in their behalf, they were resolved to take no step whereby they might be in danger of forfeiting it."

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advantageous possession than the elective throne of Transylvania, but declared that he had taken up arms not for the aggrandizement of his house but for the liberty of his nation, to which he felt more than ever bound after the marks of confidence he had received from it. Taking up the cue suggested by Bercsenyi, he declared further that he did not demand Transylvania for himself, but would be contented if the Emperor would observe the treaty concluded with Apaffy, and let the country proceed to a new free election.

Parting from Ersek Ujvar, where the interview had taken place, Wratislaw uttered those prophetic words which Rakoczi had ample occasion to remember many years thereafter. "Well, my Prince, you are putting your faith in France, which is the hospital of princes who have come to grief through her broken pledges and promises. You will increase their number and die there." A few days after him Princess Rakoczi, whose further stay had ceased to be of interest to the Austrian Court, departed for Carlsbad, never to see either Hungary or her children again. The latter were kept in Vienna, and evidently looked upon as hostages; for neither would the Emperor allow the Princess to take them with her on her visit to her husband, nor later grant their father's wish that they should be sent for their education to England or Holland.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I have been so far unable to discover in the archives of Vienna Wratislaw's own version of the interview. It is possible that he only gave a verbal account to the Emperor and his colleagues, although I think it more

The failure of Wratislaw's mission settled the matter. Still the negotiations were continued, as both sides wished to conciliate the mediators. There can be no doubt that in this game the Hungarians played their cards with better success than the Austrians, and succeeded to throw all the odium of the rupture on their adversaries.

Two obstacles blocked the progress of the negotiations—the impending expiration of the armistice, and the question of the admission of the Transylvanian deputies. Seldom have men worked with such tenacity and under such adverse circumstances for a purpose than did Stepney, Rechteren, and Bruyninx for the removal of those stumbling-stones. During that whole month of July they were continually on the move, now in Nagyszombat, then in Vienna, back to Nagyszombat, from there to Szered and Sempete, and

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likely that a report in writing was made, and is now slumbering in one of the private archives in Austria. Our sources for the interview are Rakoczi's own account in his *Memoirs* and Stepney's letter to Harley. They are contradictory, for whereas Stepney writes on July 13 that "Rakoczi was extremely dissatisfied with Wratislaw, who flatly declared that the Emperor would sooner admit his meanest subject to the princely dignity of Transylvania than allow it to him," and on the 23rd "that Wratislaw's impertinent treatment of Rakoczi at Ersek Ujvar was one of the main causes of the rupture," there is no trace of any personal offence or resentment in Rakoczi's account. He even says that Wratislaw was much impressed by his (the Prince's) arguments, and on his return to Vienna spoke so favourably of him that his own loyalty was suspected. It is true that Rakoczi wrote about twenty five years after the event; still, if Wratislaw's manner had really been so impertinent, it is not likely he would have forgotten it. Stepney wrote on the spot, but more from indirect than direct information. Between the 30th of June (date of interview) and the 13th of July he had not seen Rakoczi himself, and on July 23 everybody was under the impression of the bitterness engendered by the rupture of the negotiations. On the 2nd of July Stepney had seen Wratislaw just returning from Ersek Ujvar and seeming well pleased with his expedition. Besides, Stepney hated Wratislaw.

finally back again in Vienna, appealing to the Emperor and to Rakoczi, discussing with Salm and Wratislaw on one side, Bercsenyi, Kajali, Gerhard, and the Transylvanians on the other, exchanging State papers with the Cardinal of Lorraine and the kurucz commission, and writing the history of their efforts to their Governments.

At their urgent request the Emperor had consented to a prolongation of the armistice, but for twelve days only. Further extension was made dependent on the Hungarians waiving their demands with regard to Transylvania.

To find a form for admitting the three gentlemen from that country without prejudice or offence to either side became now the chief endeavour of the mediators. They thought that they had discovered a chance of succeeding when Rakoczi consented to eliminate his person from the question and let the Transylvanians go to the conference without his credentials, merely as deputies of the Confederate Estates of their country. But the Austrian Ministers would not hear of receiving them in this capacity, and insisted that by consenting to do so they would indirectly recognize the election of Rakoczi.<sup>1</sup> Their arguments were far from being irrefutable, and lay open to the objection that a few weeks ago they had recognized the Hungarian Confederacy, and that without prejudice to the ultimate issue a similar concession might be made to the Transylvanians.

<sup>1</sup> Wratislaw to the mediators, July 4, *Arch. Rak.* II., vol. iii, p. 115.

But since the conclusion of the armistice Marlborough had won the victory of Ramillies,<sup>1</sup> and the elation it had produced in Vienna had influenced the dispositions with regard to the Hungarian negotiations.<sup>2</sup> The utmost they would concede was to admit the three deputies as the representatives of those of their countrymen who had allied themselves with the Hungarians.

The more unbending the Austrian Ministers became, the more the kurucz leaders began to display a spirit of conciliation. Submission on the point of Transylvania without its own consent they declared to be impossible. They had concluded an alliance with the Transylvanian Confederacy; they could not now admit that it did not exist without basely abandoning their allies. But they were desirous of peace; let them have time and they would see what they could do. Already Rakoczi had facilitated matters by withdrawing his credentials; now he assured the mediators that he would call another diet to Szecsen in order to dissolve, if possible, the alliance with the Transylvanians and induce the latter to accept the Emperor's government.<sup>3</sup> But the essential thing was to prolong the armistice, and the best way to do it would be to let

<sup>1</sup> May 23, 1706.

<sup>2</sup> Stepney to Harley, June 15, 26, and July 20, *ibid.* pp. 84, 93, and 155. Prince Salm went even so far as to declare to Stepney that the recognition of the Hungarian confederacy had merely crept into the armistice by an error committed in haste (*ibid.* p. 133). The real truth appears from the Emperor's letter cited above.

<sup>3</sup> *Arch. Rak.* II., vol. iii. pp. 168 and 182.

it run indefinitely until renounced by a fortnight's notice.

Whatever may have been the intention of the kurucz leaders as to final peace, there can be no doubt about their sincerity as to the extension of the truce. It was harvest time, and as their armies were composed, this was not a convenient season for resuming operations.<sup>1</sup> Different were the tendencies and considerations which prevailed on the Austrian side. There great expectations were entertained from the proposed junction of Starhemberg's and Rabutin's forces; besides, the latter was clamouring that his stores were exhausted and his army menaced with utter ruin if shut up any longer in Transylvania. History proves that military considerations which have prompted warlike decisions, or have been alleged for them, have often been fallacious. It has been so in modern times; it was so in Vienna in 1706. Rabutin's ensuing campaign was a disastrous failure, and his army at its end in a worse plight than if it had remained in its quarters in Transylvania.<sup>2</sup> But impatience and irritation reigned amongst the Emperor's advisers, and unless the Hungarians yielded on the main point, the sooner a crushing blow was dealt to them the better.

The final decision was taken in two Cabinet Councils on the 11th and 16th of July. The medi-

<sup>1</sup> *Arch. Rak. I.*, vol. i. p. 574; Rakoczi to Karolyi: "I own I should have wished the prolongation of the armistice because of the harvest."

<sup>2</sup> *Feldzüge des Prinzen Eugen*, vol. viii. pp. 442-449.

ators were informed that the Emperor would not allow any alteration of the status of Transylvania as established by the Peace of Carlowitz, and unless the Hungarians would yield all pretensions on that point the armistice would not be prolonged. At the same time, however, the attempt to come to a direct understanding with Rakoczi was once more renewed. The messenger selected for this last appeal was his sister, the Countess of Aspremont. She arrived in Ersek Ujvar on the very day of the last Cabinet Council, and was to repeat to her brother all the offers his wife and Wratislaw had brought before her. Moreover, she was to tell him that the Emperor had given his powers in blank, which he might fill according to his desire with anything but Transylvania. Rakoczi had always been very fond of his sister, and received her with heartfelt joy. But now no more than before would he accept any private arrangement. She stayed five days with her brother, whom she was never to see again, and then returned to Vienna together with the mediators. There patents were already affixed on all the church doors notifying the people that the armistice was coming to an end, and warning them to take care of their goods outside the city walls.

With the expiration of the armistice another of the Court's confidential messengers returned to Vienna. This was Count Kery, the Emperor's Hungarian Master of the Horse. He was married to Bercsenyi's stepdaughter, but was as loyal to the Emperor as

Palatine Esterhazy or General Palfly. He had spent nearly four weeks with his wife in Nagyszombat, Trencsen, and Brunocz, on a visit to his mother-in-law, and had been in constant intercourse with Bercsenyi, but his endeavours proved as vain as all the others.

Negotiations had come to an end. On receipt of the Court's final reply the Hungarian commissioners drew up a protest, in which they defended their proceeding, invoked the mediators' own testimony for their sincerity and love of peace, and laid the blame of the rupture on the tyrannical desires of their adversaries.<sup>1</sup> For the same purpose Rakoczi addressed a flaming manifesto to the nation<sup>2</sup> and at the same time wrote to Queen Anne, the Government of the Netherlands,<sup>3</sup> and the Duke of Marlborough, thanking them for their mediation and invoking their future interest. In his letter to the Duke he pathetically observes that his glorious victories won on another field for the liberty of Europe seem destined to crush that of Hungary. And as a further appeal to the public opinion of mankind he caused the rejoinder to the Austrian reply of June 28, which for lack of time the Hungarians could not bring in at the Congress, to be printed and published in book form, copies of which were sent to all the powers of Europe.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For its text see *Histoire des Révolutions*, vol. i. pp. 430-435.

<sup>2</sup> It was published in Latin and Hungarian. For the former text see *Arch. Rak. II.*, vol. iii. pp. 196-199.

<sup>3</sup> *Histoire des Révolutions*, vol. i. pp. 436-438; to Marlborough, *Arch. Rak. II.*, vol. iii. p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Histoire des Révolutions*, vol. ii. pp. 459-504, Veracius Constantius.



The haggling over words and forms, the refusal to prolong the armistice, perhaps also the constant endeavours to discard their services had turned the mediators against the Court of Austria. None more so than Stepney. As an Englishman and a Protestant he sympathized with a nation which undoubtedly was struggling for liberty, and five-sixths of whom he supposed to belong to his creed. Rakoczi's personality, his public aims, his private disinterestedness had strongly impressed him. Of Bercsenyi, his pride, his spirit of cavil, his desire to raise obstacles, his evasions and delays, he and his colleagues had often complained, but never so bitterly as they did now of Salm<sup>1</sup> and Wratislaw. They had no doubt of the Emperor's wish for peace with his subjects, but they bewailed that instead of following his own inclination and judgment he submitted to the violent counsels of his Ministers and Generals. And they expressed their views and feelings not only in private despatches to their Governments, but in open speeches to the kurucz leaders and the Emperor himself. Taking leave from the former, they told them to make their protestation strong and to be of good cheer, for they had a just cause,<sup>2</sup> and having asked and obtained an audience from the

<sup>1</sup> Charles Theodor, Prince Salm, Field-marshal, Obersthofmeister and President of the Cabinet Council, was during the first four years of Emperor Joseph's reign his most influential Minister. He hated France and everything French; at the same time he was always in antagonism to Prince Eugen, and still more to Wratislaw. His violent and arrogant temper made him lose the favour of the Emperor. He retired in 1709, and died in 1710.

<sup>2</sup> Bercsenyi to Rakoczi, *Arch. Rak. J.*, vol. v. pp. 161-162, and Bercsenyi to Karolyi, *Rakoczi Tar*, vol. ii. pp. 133-136.

Emperor in order to give him a formal account of their mission, they attributed its failure frankly to his Ministers and Generals, and told him that the Hungarians had never been so well disposed for peace, that Rakoczi had dissociated himself from the Transylvanian question, that Bercsenyi had shown the utmost mortification at the rupture, that the other Hungarian commissioners lamented it with tears in their eyes, and that nothing had been wanting but a little more time and moderation on the Austrian side.<sup>1</sup> Rechteren, whose mission had only been temporary, then returned home, and Stepney asked for his recall, which was granted by the British Government with all tokens of approval of his services, and he transferred to The Hague.

Stepney's address to the Emperor found its way into the press,<sup>2</sup> and was read all over Europe. Nowhere did it evoke a more sympathetic echo than in the countries of the Emperor's allies,<sup>3</sup> and mortifying were the reproaches to which Counts Gallas and Goess had to listen in London and at The Hague. There the discontent was the greater, as the Austrians withdrew four regiments from the army on the Rhine to send them to Hungary. English and Dutch complained that the burthen of the great war from the frontier of Alsace to that of

<sup>1</sup> For the text of the address see *Arch. R&A. II.*, vol. iii. pp. 181-182.

<sup>2</sup> It appeared first in Holland, then in the *Daily Courant* of London, August 28, 1706, and was reprinted in the German, Swiss, and Italian Gazettes.

<sup>3</sup> Hoffmann, the Emperor's resident in London, wrote, September 10, that it had made the worst impression in the world.—*Vienna Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv*.

Belgium was thus thrown on their shoulders. The complaints of the Netherlands, where a considerable party had already had enough of the whole war,<sup>1</sup> were particularly bitter, and found vent in a note which the States-General sent to Vienna, and which for acerbity of language has seldom been equalled in correspondence between friendly and allied powers.<sup>2</sup> Very different was the impression Rakoczi's letter made,<sup>3</sup> and the answers they received. Queen Anne, addressing him in her reply as "my cousin," wrote that she had been much gratified to hear of his desire for peace, that she would gladly renew her efforts, and assured him of her affection and goodwill for Hungary.<sup>4</sup> The States-General wrote in the same sense,<sup>5</sup> and in both countries the interest and sympathy for Hungary, which had already been on the wane, were rekindled.

No Hungarian can read the history of those days without a feeling of gratitude for the manly and generous sympathies of Stepney. But an impartial historian will hardly subscribe to his statement that with a little more time and a little more moderation on the Austrian side his efforts for peace would have succeeded. It is not likely that this would have been the case, even if the Austrians had prolonged the armistice and stickled less about the designation of the Transylvanian deputies. The

<sup>1</sup> Harley to Stepney, August 27, *Arch. Rák. II.*, vol. iii, p. 216.

<sup>2</sup> For its text see *ibid.* pp. 203-210.

<sup>3</sup> Harley told Gallas that Rakoczi's letter to the Queen was a mighty fine one.

<sup>4</sup> For its text see *ibid.* pp. 253-254.

<sup>5</sup> For its text see *Histoire des Révolutions*, vol. i. pp. 440-441.

real issue lay not in a name but in the possession of a country. Rakoczi and Bercsenyi knew this full well. What they were anxious to avoid was that the break should occur over anything which might seem a personal question, and what they deliberated over was whether to break now on the point in dispute or, yielding on it, to leave the rupture to some future issue.<sup>1</sup>

Strange as it might seem to foreign readers that Hungarian patriots should have wanted to split their country in two and seen their political ideal in the erection of a hybrid principality, Rakoczi and his kurucz followers did not see the question in this light. They were the sons and grandsons of the men who had fought under Bocskay, Bethlen, and George Rakoczi, and the traditions which had developed in those days were alive in them. And their views and feelings were shared by labancz nobles who otherwise were as loyal to their Emperor King as Salm and Wratislaw themselves. The peace negotiations had hardly been broken off when Palatine Esterhazy, Chief Justice Erdody, Nicholas Palfy, and other Hungarians residing in Vienna petitioned the Emperor to resume them, and re-

<sup>1</sup> See Bercsenyi's letter of June 29 cited above, pp. 319, 320. A week later, July 6, he wrote to Rakoczi: "It is impossible to hope for an assurance *de non praejudicanda electione* (without prejudice to the election), and it would not be advisable to move this question before setting the commission in activity (the Hungarians having refused to accept the Imperial reply) and then suffer a denial . . . or to break on it."—*Arch. Rak. I.*, vol. v. p. 150.

And again on July 15: "In the meanwhile we may also get your answer, whether giving way on the name as Estates we had better leave the rupture of the treaty to something else or break off now on this."—*Ibid.* pp. 160-161. Compare also his letter of the next day, *ibid.* p. 163.

commended that Transylvania be joined to Hungary as a vassal state, but its government left to an elective prince as it had been before.<sup>1</sup> Besides, the issue before Rakoczi was not the simple one between reunion and separation. The Austrians had not re-incorporated the province into the mother-country, but simply established their own rule therein. To the Transylvanian nobles the glorious conquests of the Turkish war had so far only brought a diminution of freedom and importance. There was a shadowy civil government in which they had a share, but real power was exercised by the Emperor's military commanders, Caraffa and, after him, Rabutin. Their own views are curiously reflected in a political pamphlet which one of them, Count Niclas Bethlen, wrote at the time. He proposed that for the pacification of both countries Rakoczi should receive a duchy in the German Empire in exchange for his Hungarian possessions, that these should be given to Bercsenyi, together with the office of Palatine, and that the Emperor himself should select a prince for Transylvania among the ruling Protestant houses of Germany, marry him to an archduchess, and that he should be granted a hereditary title, but pay an annual tribute to the King of Hungary and the Sultan.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Stepney to Harley, August 14, *Arch. Rak. II.*, vol. iii. p. 192, and more in detail Miller, *Epistolæ*, vol. ii. pp. 294-299.

<sup>2</sup> Bethlen's pamphlet nearly cost him his head. It was destined for the representatives of the Protestant powers in Vienna, but fell into Rabutin's hands, who had its author arrested and sentenced to death. The sentence was, however, not executed.

That the Emperor should not have yielded was perfectly natural. He was fighting France for Spain, Belgium, Naples, and Lombardy, but for him and his house all the issues involved in the great war were of minor importance when compared to Transylvania. As King of Hungary he was asked to consent to the loss of a province for the express purpose that its new master should control and keep in check his government of the rest.

Underlying all the avowed considerations there was a still greater one which entered into the question. The House of Habsburg then stood upon two lives. Although there was no reason to suppose that the two princes, Josef and Charles, who both were under thirty, would both die without male issue, the contingency entered into all political combinations of the day. Friends and foes of the hereditary succession could alike have no doubt that in such a case the right of election would revert to the nation, and the possibility was that the then ruling prince of Transylvania would be the most likely candidate for the throne.

Rakoczi had this point clearly before his mind. "He would be blind indeed," so he wrote,<sup>1</sup> "who could not see why the House of Austria bases its right to Transylvania on conquest and desires to make the right of arms the foundation of its rule there. It is easy to see why some of their Ministers would rather consent to the amputation of their

<sup>1</sup> To Okolicsanyi, Dec. 26, 1706, *Arch. Rak. I.*, vol. i, pp. 449-450.

arm than sign its cession. They evidently have the extinction of the male line in view, and wish also that in that event the heirs in the female line should hold with Transylvania the reins of Hungary in their hands. But they are mistaken if they think that these subtleties are only understood by them. For this reason—so help me God—and for no other would I rather advise my country to continue the war than consent to that which will make it weep for ever hereafter."

The previsions thus floating in the minds of men were realized seventeen years later, and without entering too far into conjecture, it may safely be asserted that the fundamental law—known as the pragmatic sanction—which assured the succession of Maria Theresa, and for the first time laid down the principle of a community of interests between Austria and Hungary, would hardly have been passed had Rakoczi reigned in Kolozsvár at the time.

In the light of subsequent events Rakoczi's decision is deeply to be regretted. It may be safely asserted that the development of Hungary would have been very different had peace been concluded at Nagyszombat in 1706 instead of five years later in Szathmar. After long and severe oppression, which had threatened her national existence, Hungary had risen to life again. Her Austrian rulers had learned one lesson—not that they had been wrong, for that they did not admit—

nor that Hungary was too strong for them, for that had not been proven—but that their discontent weakened their own power and lessened their influence amongst the nations of Europe. This lesson was not forgotten during the succeeding reigns, but it might have borne richer fruit had Hungary herself been left in better condition to profit by it. At the end of the war the country was not only materially ruined, but its life-springs seemed benumbed and impaired. The war had lasted eight years, it had been fought on Hungarian soil, it had ended in defeat. The reaction from the high-strung efforts was inevitable and deep, and a torpor spread over the nation which lasted for well-nigh three generations.







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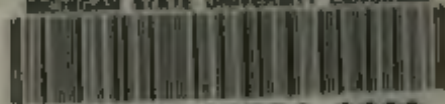
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